Mazaar, Bazaar

DESIGN AND VISUAL CULTURE IN PAKISTAN

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EDITED AND DESIGNED BY
SAIMA ZAIDI

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To my mother, Shahida, and
to the memory of my father, Zafar Hasnain Zaidi

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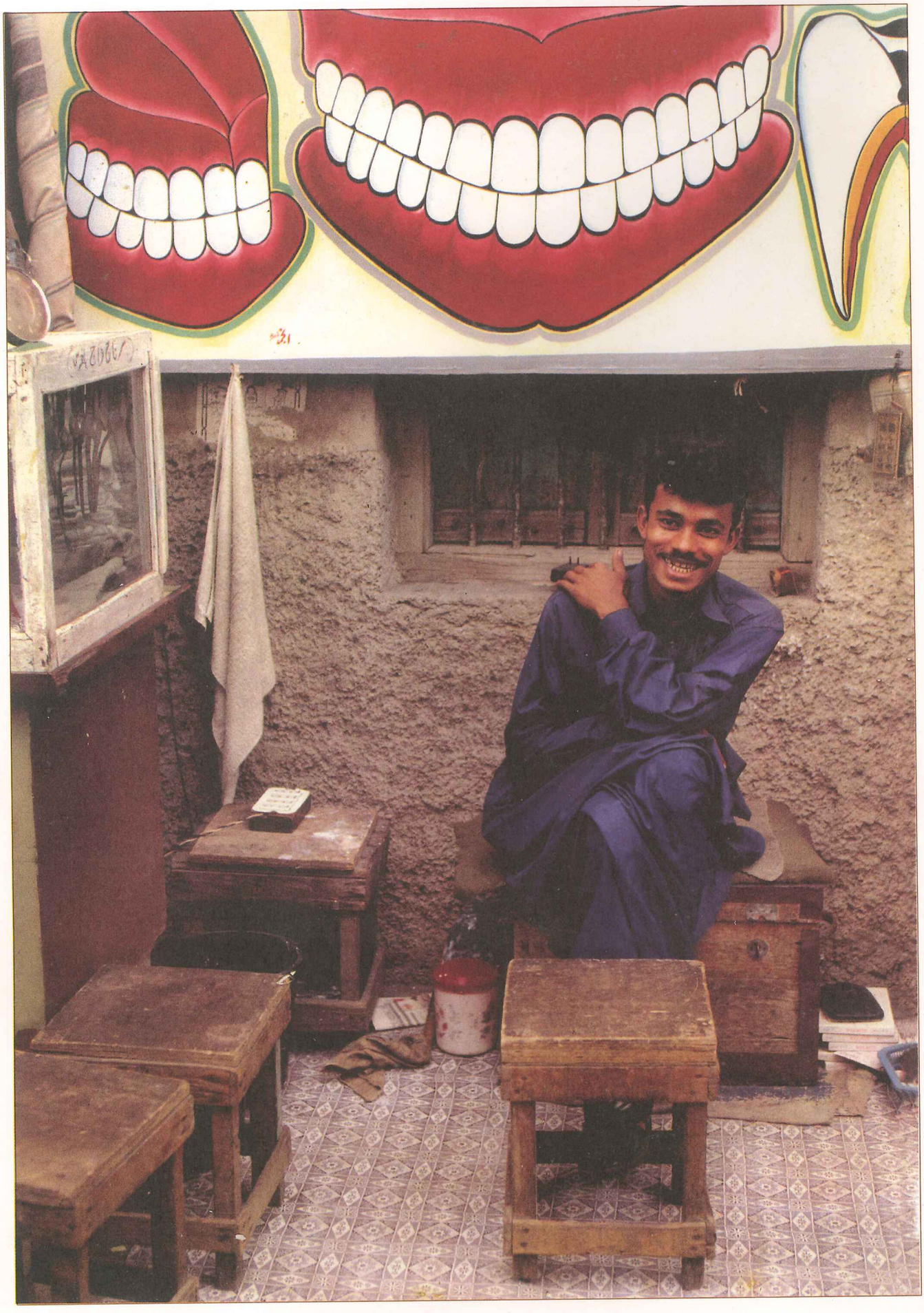

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Figure 1. A dental technician smiles in front of a signboard depicting an image of dentures, in his roadside shop in Saddar, Karachi.

INTRODUCTION

Mazaar, Bazaar[1]*: Design and Visual Culture in Pakistan* is an interdisciplinary study, based on thirty-three essays which explore the interaction between visuals and their viewers. They analyze the different meanings that can be derived from images, what they reveal about the culture and eras in which they were shaped, and how the present-day viewer engages with an image-saturated environment, especially in the urban space.

In the book, design is broadly interpreted as communication through image and typography; it encompasses graphic, packaging and information design, as well as advertising. The term visual culture covers popular or mass culture and ancient and contemporary art and architecture, but does not include the moving image.

The contributions—the text and a majority of photographs—were made specifically for this book; they comment on a pluralistic society and reflect a visual culture that evolved from centuries of exchange with diverse civilizations. This resulted in an inclusivity underscored by the coexistence of contradictions—spiritual and material, realism and fantasy, tradition and modernity. An understanding of diversity is particularly relevant today when technology has aided access to sources of other cultures and triggered an unprecedented desire to retain a distinct identity while appreciating other influences; there is an increasing introspection among students and practitioners of design and visual culture to investigate the historic, geopolitical and social issues regarding their work and its effect on society.

This book is organized into five sections:

Dekh Magar Pyar Se LOOK, BUT WITH LOVE, an inscription usually written on public transport, focuses on popular visual vernacular indigenous to Pakistan. The flamboyant, cluttered sensibility is marked by an uninhibited approach, the content usually driven by fantasy, in search of the ideal. 'Over-the-top' and 'chaotic' are adjectives which crop up in the essays in this section. Providing visual clues to the dreams and desires of the people, the predominantly handcrafted genre has roots in mythology, folklore, superstition, ritual and religion.

1. *Mazaar: a tomb or shrine, usually revering a saint. Bazaar: market.*

In the first essay of this section, *The Journey,* Durre S. Ahmed interprets three icons: the *Buraq*, a heavenly winged steed on which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ascended to heaven, *Jhuley Lal*, the patron saint of travellers represented by an old man carried over water by a fish, and *Zuljinnah*, the steed of Imam Hussain (AS) martyred in the Battle of Karbala. Ahmed examines the icons insofar as they elicit or exemplify the search for adventure, an opportunity 'to encounter difference', to satisfy psychological-spiritual curiosity with the ultimate aim of attaining a higher self-awareness. In a continuation of this theme in *Rehmat ka Sayah* 'Shadow of Mercy', Jürgen Wasim Frembgen draws attention to the 'blessing power' of the devotional pictures of Sufi saints which displayed prominently in sacred or secular spaces, function as 'a statement of religious identity' and as a medium for communion with God. Taking this a step further, in *Horsemen and Saviours,* Michel Boivin analyses the worship of these icons by Hindu communities in present-day Sindh, drawing parallels with other religions in which horse-mounted warriors rescuing humanity are a popular motif. He comments on the divinized heroes, Darya Pir, Ramdeo Pir and Pithoro Pir (traditionally venerated by outcaste communities) and their symbols which exhibit certain characteristics normally accepted as Islamic, and suggests that the icons could have acted as saviours for followers of both faiths—a case in point being *Jhuley Lal* or *Udero Lal*, mentioned in the earlier essay.

In *Semiotics of the Nations Icons,* Naazish Ata-ullah traces the development of miniature painting as a craft, from the 'preservation of a precolonial past' during the British Raj to the contemporary neo-miniature painting movement that breaks free from traditional subjects. In this essay M. Imran Qureshi offers a visual contribution of select contemporary miniatures by several artists which are juxtaposed with truck art—allowing 'a strange democratization of iconography'. This impulse is also captured by Amean J. in his photo essay, *W-11: The Minibus* in which the passenger escapes the concrete jungle into a rainbow of peacocks, flowers and sunsets—a 'shrine' to the imagination of the artist.

In *Aina* 'Mirror': *Design as a Reflection of Lollywood Content,* Hasan Zaidi discusses the melodrama enacted on 'larger-than-life' cinema hoardings and its subdued version of film posters. He contends that they echo the change in the content and standard of films in Pakistan over the last few decades. He also laments the replacement of the craft of hand painted cinema hoardings by state-of-the-art computerized printouts—an inevitable and unenviable result of technological advances. Malcolm Hutcheson, sharing a similar view, contributes his collection of *Rooh Kheench* 'Spirit Pulling' *Backdrops for Photography* popular during the 1950s and 1960s by seeing the photography session as a ritual which allows the sitter to step into a spectacular 'stage' of grand mansions and skylines. In the same essay, Atteqa Ali elaborates that the presence of a hybrid style of imagery in the backdrops is the result of an imagined amalgamation of East and West and 'an aspiration to be modern'. In *The Mace and Sceptre: Iconography in Pehelwan Posters,* Aasim Akhtar lauds the effort of the artist/designer who crowds several wrestlers on a poster, remaining true to his own 'raw' aesthetic. While Adeela Suleman in *Fal: Divination for Men seeking a Bride* presents an illustrated version of predicting the nature of the wife-to-be, rooted in ancient forms of fortune-telling.

The next section, READ is titled after the Qur'anic injunction *Iqra* and underscores the sanctity of the 'written word'. It covers the visual implications of the cursive Perso-Arabic script on diverse media with differing lifespans: the newspaper, posters, graffiti and architecture.

In *Jang* 'War': *The Urdu Newspaper: Promoting a Culture of Liberation or Subservience?,* Aasim Sajjad Akhtar questions the level of autonomy exercised by the press and condemns the prevalence of sensationalism in the Urdu press. In *Ijtimaa' Posters Advertising Religious Congregations,* Sohail Zuberi shares photographs of type-saturated posters plastered on walls in the urban environment. Both Urdu newspapers and *Ijtimaa'* Posters show a tendency towards congestion of information on a page, contrary to the 'less-is-more' philosophy. Every centimetre of space is utilized to avoid 'waste' and hierarchy is maintained through variations in font size. In *Heroes and Zeroes,* Durre S. Ahmed analyses wall chalkings advertising cures for impotence and those calling for jihad which she argues display 'a collective crisis of masculinity, religion, sexuality and love'. Arif Mahmood's photo essay *Calligraffiti* documents writing in the public space as a form of decoration, information and self-expression. In *Not Reading the Writing on the Wall,* Jamal J. Elias discusses the Qur'anic verses on mosques and madrasahs, stressing that they perform a symbolic function as the ornate text is virtually unreadable—an awe-inspiring identifier of religious buildings.

The section BE PAKISTANI, BUY PAKISTANI is a celebration and critique of consumer culture and is a review of some household names, their retail packaging and/or their advertising strategies.

In *Naajo Mehndi and Henna Hands*, Naiza H. Khan explores perceptions of 'feminine heroism' through her artwork consisting of female forms created with henna pigment. She contends that the most prized female virtue in the subcontinent remains that of sacrifice. On the other hand, Durriya Kazi focuses on the ideals of beauty, sensuality and romance in *Tibet Talcum Powder*, the familiar, evergreen portrait of a woman on the package designed in 1951, reflecting and responding to Pakistani society instead of attempting to shape it, as is evident in contemporary global marketing. In *Rooh Afza: Drink of the East!* Zarminae Ansari acknowledges the popular beverage introduced in the subcontinent over a century ago as representing 'home' for the Pakistani diaspora—a successful tradition-based advertising strategy linking the drink

with religious and nationalistic pride. Mariam Ali Baig in *The Pakola Tale* discusses another beverage, 'Pakola'—a product of a newly-partitioned Pakistan similarly laying strong claims to patriotism through its name and colour. In *Brand Take-off,* Faraz Maqsood Hamidi with a visual contribution by Abbas Ali traces the design evolution of Pakistan International Airlines—a reminder of a progressive, liberal not-so-distant past which defined the Airlines as 'world-class'. Meanwhile, in *To Let: Billboards in the Urban Space*, Arif Hasan shifts the focus from products to the billboards which sell them. He articulates concern over how they have swallowed up in an unbridled instance of visual pollution the cityscape—an off shoot of corporate consumer culture.

The next section, *Pakistan Zindabad*! LONG LIVE PAKISTAN! addresses the construct of a new national graphic identity by a postcolonial Pakistan, characterized by a conscious obliteration of the scars of the past, a revival of suppressed tradition, and an optimistic, progressive attitude. The state-generated as well as commercial designs provide a visual record of the many twists and turns the country has taken since August 1947.

In *Beyond the Symbolic to the Significant,* Ayesha Jalal views the national flag, its assorted versions which proliferate especially around Independence Day and their implication on freedom of expression. She exposes the acute disconnect between the initial intended national vision and the current state of affairs. In *Re-imagining the Image,* Akbar Zaidi concentrates on advertisements featuring a youthful, dynamic Mohammad Ali Jinnah as opposed to the familiar, elderly iconic figure of the 'Founder of the Nation', a refreshing change likely to appeal to the burgeoning population of the youth in Pakistan. In *Currents in Currency,* Quddus Mirza criticizes the decorative in the design of currency notes, referring to it as 'form *failing* function'. In *Signs of the Times,* Adil Salahuddin contributes a visual history of the country through a selection of postage stamps while Rubina Saigol sheds light on issues included as well as excluded from appearing on these stamps. While Feica in *Drawing Political Change* provides satirical insight by documenting certain political events during the last three decades. In the last essay of this section, *The Art of the Possible,* I review the visual campaigns of political parties leading to the elections in 2008. It focuses on the party symbols and their recognition by the electorate, the heavy reliance on profiling party leaders and candidates on posters and billboards instead of the social issues that the party would address, if successful.

The final section, PRE-PARTITION PERSPECTIVE goes back in time to reveal the rich and diverse cultures assimilated continuously by the region over several centuries. It is a visual memoir which permits the reader to comprehend certain influences—stylistically as well as substance wise—prevailing in contemporary visual culture.

Chromolithography and the Mayo School of Arts, Lahore (1917–1920 CE) by Nadeem Omar Tarar offers a glimpse into advertising and propaganda printed during the First World War by the Lithography Department of the School established by the British Colonial state. Lutfullah Khan shares a part of his remarkable collection of *Safety Match Box Labels (1925–1935 CE)* which chronicle an inclusive lifestyle and culture—the miniature space even providing a platform for the propagation of ideologies. Akbar Naqvi

celebrates the tradition of literature, miniature painting and calligraphy in his essay *Observations on The Miniature Painting in Nizami's Khamsa*, a Mughal manuscript from the fifteenth century. He highlights the fusion of religions, languages, nations and cultures which adorn the pages of the *Khamsa*, paying particular tribute to the independent and intelligent heroines who have the courage to pursue their destiny. Francisco José Luis in *Guru Nanak Shah Faqir: Sufi and Shi'a Elements in the representation of Guru Nanak* focuses on a painting from the Sanskrit manuscript, *The Jewel of the Essences of All Sciences* and highlights the dual symbolism in the portrait of the teacher of Sikhism, a tradition with roots in fifteenth century India. Asma Ibrahim in *Obverse, Reverse: History of Coinage in the Indus Region* presents a chronology of the evolution of coinage within the territories now forming Pakistan, providing a visual timeline of ancient civilizations. The subjects frequently depicted on the coins since 600 BCE are religion and mythology accompanied with a reference or a portrait of the rulers, granting them immortality. Ivana Prazic offers *Storyboards in Stone: The Buddhist Art of Gandhara*, which includes second and third century rock-carvings and narrative friezes relating the biography of Buddha—heirlooms from an era when Buddhism flourished in the region. And Jonathan Mark Kenoyer in *The Design of Seals from Indus Valley: Geometric, Naturalistic and Narrative Motifs* provides research regarding these ancient motifs and their possible interpretations.

Finally, a word about the motivation behind the book and the process it went through. While conducting History of Design courses at the University of Karachi and the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, I realized that there was a lack of access to material on the subject within the Pakistani context. This culminated in a research assignment on popular products for third-year students, some of which is incorporated in the section, *Be Pakistani, Buy Pakistani*. The rest of the essays were gradually added as relevant images were discovered and researched, and appropriate writers—pursuing a variety of professions and disciplines, including art and design—were identified. I hope they will encourage the readers to further explore, appreciate, document and share the vast range of design and visuals that surround us. The project led me to museums across the country, the *mazaars* of Sehwan Sharif and Data Darbar, the necropolis of Makli and *mandirs* in Thatta, *Qissa Khwani Bazaar* in Peshawar, Anarkali and Lakshmi Chowk in Lahore, the valley of Swat, the Khori Garden and tiny calligraphy ateliers on M.A. Jinnah Road in Karachi—in short, from *Mazaar* to *Bazaar*.

Dekh Magar Pyar Se

LOOK, BUT WITH LOVE

1.

THE JOURNEY
Buraq, Jhuley Lal and Zuljinnah

DURRE S. AHMED

Buraq was now brought near, as lightning swift—
God had created him from His pure light,
From head to toe enlivened by God's light—
And from the wind he learned swiftness and speed.
The Prophet mounted him in time and space;
He left this place for 'Where there is no place.'[i]
FARIDUDDIN ATTAR, *Ilahi Nama*

Buraq is the heavenly steed on which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) made *Isra* (The Night Journey) on 27 *Rajab*,[ii] in the year before the *Hijra*.[iii]

Glory to (Allah) Who did take His Servant
For a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque
To the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did Bless—
in order that We might show him some of Our Signs:
for He is the One Who Heareth and Seeth (all things)
Surah Al Isra (17:1)[iv]

As the Holy Qur'an informs in this *surah*, the Apostle is transported from the 'Sacred Mosque' (Ka'aba at Makkah) to the 'Farthest Mosque' (*Masjid al-Aqsa*, Jerusalem) then rising through the seven Heavens to the Sublime Throne. This ascension to Heaven is referred to as the *Mi'raj*.[v]

The heavenly mount brought for this voyage by Archangel Gabriel was...*a white beast, between a mule and an ass, with wings at his sides wherewith he moved his legs; and his every stride was as far as his eye could see.*[vi] The image of the *buraq* has become an amulet or talisman, and is commonly seen adorning freight and tanker trucks in Pakistan and Afghanistan.[vii]

Figure 1. Buraq painting by truck artist, Haji Sahib, Karachi, 2003
The Buraq *painted on the back of a truck is in full bridal attire with a bride's nose ring, the hooves gracefully crossed. Quoting Schimmel 'One can be sure that this sacred creature will protect the vehicle along the rugged roads of Pakistan, as it once carried the beloved Prophet (PBUH) swiftly and safely through the galaxies'.*

i. SCHIMMEL, ANNE MARIE *And Muhammad is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety* The Prophet's Night Journey and Ascension. Helmut Ritter's edition of the Persian text of the *Ilahi Nama* (p. 166).
ii. The seventh month of the Islamic lunar calendar.
iii. The Arabian lunar calendar denoting the migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah. Corresponds to 622 CE.
iv. Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Amana Corporation, Maryland, USA. AH 1412/1992 CE.
v. *Mi'raj* means stairway, ladder or way of ascent.
vi. LINGS, MARTIN *Muhammad—His life based on the earliest sources.* Chapter xxxii: 'The Light of Thy Countenance' published by Suhail Academy for Da'wah Academy International Islamic University Islamabad. 1983, 1994 (p. 101).
vii. Ibid., i, (pp. 170–172).

The journey is an archetypal trope signifying discovery and knowledge, not only of the physical world but more so, of the psychological and spiritual. Linked to the adventures and 'the quest' of the hero, it is a universally occurring theme, hence 'The Hero with a Thousand Faces'.[1]

Typically, the hero myth concerns a young male who is separated from his origins at a young age. Entrusted with a mission, he faces a series of trials, obstacles, terrifying forces. Eventually victorious, he returns to his origins and is acknowledged as the ruler/law giver. Finally, because he is mortal, there is his decline/fall and death. In archetypal psychology, the hero is a symbol of our idea of 'I'/'me', that is, my consciousness and subjectivity about not only myself but also how I construct the 'meaning'(s) of life *vis-à-vis* the world. The journey then, is not only about the physical/literal, but more importantly, the metaphysical/symbolic, entailing a move from unconsciousness (ignorance) to consciousness (knowledge).

Whether in Homer's *Odyssey* or the *Dastan-e Amir Hamza*, as literary epic, folklore and mythical legend, the journey(s) of the hero is ultimately about the human/individual life cycle and the evolution and transformation of the ego towards greater self awareness. If engaged in successfully, the journey-as-psychological-process frequently culminates at the threshold of the religious/spiritual, containing within itself the seeds of yet other (subjective) journeys in a spiral of similar dynamics. The images from popular South Asian folklore of the *Buraq*, *Jhuley Lal* and *Zuljinnah*, encapsulate some key elements of this theme.

THE CULTURAL SCAFFOLDING

For the archetypal psychologist, to study human behaviour is to study its culture(s) and the patterns of archetypal portrayal in art, mythology, religion, architecture, drama etc. The roots of culture are in religion. The visual arts, music, theatre, dance, poetry, epic, have all emerged in every culture, from religion. What can be summed up as a 'way of life', are frequently

unconscious religious/spiritual ideas permeating human existence. Prior to the advent of modernity and globalization, but still widely evident in much of the world including South Asia, innumerable human activities are accompanied by some prayer/ritual. From bathing and eating, to travel and relationships—even defecation—all have an aspect connected to the invisible/transcendent.

Thus, culture can be imagined in terms of horizontal and vertical dimensions. Forming a sort of visible/invisible scaffolding, it opens an inner—psychological—space inhabited by human subjectivity and within which the individual can address the 'eternal questions', such as, 'Who am I?', 'What is the meaning (or not) of life?', 'Where do I come from and where will I go?' The three images should be seen as a part of this archetypal cultural context and its interface between the self, society/Other and religion.

ENCOUNTERING DIFFERENCE

To journey is to leave behind the familiar and known. The human sensorium functions on the principle of contrast. Psychophysics confirms the fact that without a contrasting element in our visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory fields, no information processing is possible, that is, we cannot perceive, leave alone know, anything.[2] The absence of contrast creates an experiential 'blindness', 'deafness' etc. and can even lead to delusion and psychosis. All cultures intuitively recognized this existential human limitation which, perhaps, is why, in all traditions, the sages urge(d) the seeker to travel.

One cannot know oneself without knowing difference. Encountering difference—in culture, language, the Other etc.—can become a catalyst to better knowledge of what one perceives as 'me' and 'mine'. 'To understand himself man needs to be understood by another. To be understood by another he needs to understand the other.'[3] In the Qur'an, differences within humanity are a given, a 'Sign' of God to be reflected on, the purpose being mutual self-knowledge (49: 14–15).[4] The journey then has a 'consciousness-raising' potential at different levels.

The Socratic command 'know thyself', finds its psycho-spiritual counterpart in three *Hadiths* of the Prophet (PBUH): 'whosoever knows himself, knows (his) God'; 'Man's knowledge of himself comes before his knowledge of God', and 'seek knowledge even if you have to go to China'. They suggest an interconnected process and can, again, be represented as part of a vertical and horizontal axis implying different types of journeys and the expansion of consciousness.

RISK AND DANGER

The images of *Buraq* and *Jhuley Lal* are directly linked to the travel/journey motif, appearing on modern vehicles ranging from tankers and freight trucks to taxis, rickshaws and minibuses. The images serve the dual function of displaying a competitive, decorative artistry, but more importantly, as protective talismans; journeys are fraught with risk and danger. The archetypal narrative inevitably contains encounter(s) with the fearful and unexpected. Monsters and seemingly impossible-to-overcome scenarios

Figure 2. ANGELS PUTTING THE SOUL OF MAN BACK INTO HIS BODY
Painting by Anwar Saeed
Acrylic and oil on wood, 1996.

From being 'a quadruped, larger than a donkey but smaller than a horse', the Buraq has mysteriously evolved into 'an increasingly fantastic and grandiose image: the poets have described this creature created from light, as having a woman's head and a peacock's tail'. This fantasy is captured in Ghanizade's Mi'rajiyye, *from seventeenth century Turkey, where the poet praises:*

The heavenly messenger came to the holy Prophet in that night,
He brought a Buraq, fast like lightning and sky-traversing,
It was a strange mount, trotting speedily,
running about now on earth and now on the heavenly Throne.
In the earthly realm a hastening gazelle,
in the heavens a swiftly flying phoenix.
Its body, roses; its hair, hyacinth; imperial its tail,
that delightful tail;
Its ear a lily's petal;
its reddish eye a simmering narcissus...

Such poems correspond to the paintings of the Mi'raj *found in Indian or Turkish manuscripts. Artists, too, have given free rein to the imagination, borrowing the icon for spectacular and seemingly unrelated circumstances, as in the painting by Saeed.*

2.

threaten the hero with death and annihilation. The talismanic function of these images which (un)consciously links their 'end users' (such as truck drivers) to the symbolic world, is far removed from the motivations and attitudes underlying the modern idea of journey-as-tourism.

An ascendant literalism and parallel loss of the symbolic imagination is now a defining feature of modernity. While the desire for encounter and difference remains, every type of physical, psychological and emotional risk is minimized: mingling with locals/natives, tasting the cuisine, drinking bottled water and eventually returning to the comfort and security of the hotel. The entire experience is literal. Risk is 'thrills' like river rafting or bungee jumping. Having 'been there, done that', we return home—at best, quantitatively more knowledgeable about another place but qualitatively remain at the same level of ignorance about self and Other. Between mass-packaged tourism and globalization's steady obliteration of cultural diversity, the journey has become reduced to a physical-sensory experience. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

INNER AND OUTER JOURNEYS

The three images—*Buraq, Jhuley Lal* and *Zuljinnah*—represent the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the psychological–spiritual journey. Collectively they form a conceptual *mandala*,[i] encompassing dimensions of height, depth and breadth and the four elements—air, water, fire and earth.

The most well known image, the mythical steed *Buraq*, represents the vertical axis and the aspect of height in the Prophet's (PBUH) famed night journey, the *Isra*. The ascent towards God is towards light, a gravity defying, free-of-body ideal, of feeling/being light. The dominant element is air, signifying pure (invisible) spirit and the light of spiritual purity. For Muslims, the *Isra* represents their Prophet (PBUH) reaching the highest possible point of the vertical axis—the pinnacle of the spiritual quest and its fulfilment. Clearly this journey is not for all, and remains a symbolic ideal. However, most prophets undergo many difficult journeys before embarking on the spiritual one(s) and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was no exception. If anything, the Qur'an is categorical about him being '... a man like yourselves' (18:111). Thus, before the ascent to light and height, the vertical axis inherently implies the necessity of understanding what it means to be human, warts and all. Coming down to earth, the vertical axis moves into the dimensions of depth and descent, exemplified by water.

In the Qur'an, water is the source of life (11:8, 21:31) and in Jungian psychology, it is a primary symbol of the complexity and power of the personal and collective unconscious. Compared with air and light, water's depths are often dark, unknown, threatening to pull us further down. If the *Isra* is the ideal par excellence about knowing (one's) God, then *Jhuley Lal/ Khidr/Udero Lal* are about the prerequisite of knowing one's self. Whether we approach the question through psychoanalytic ideas or religious ones,

i. *Mandala*: Sanskrit for 'circle', 'completion'. Any of various graphic/geometric designs representing metaphysical or symbolic totality, most frequently by the square or/and circle divided into four sections and related variations. Used as a meditation device in certain schools of Hinduism and Buddhism. In Jungian psychology, it corresponds to basic, universal religious symbols.

The name *Jhuley*[i] *Lal*, 'the patron saint of travellers', is often seen painted in vibrant colours on public transport and is iconographically represented by a white-bearded man travelling on water with a 'fish'[ii] as his vehicle. He is remembered by Muslims as Shaikh Muhammad Tahir (equated with Khwaja Khidr), and by the Hindus as *Bhoj Amer Lal* or *Udero Lal*[iii] (derived from *odaka*, a Sanskrit word meaning water).[iv] He is worshipped by a Hindu sect, the *Darya Panthis* (Followers of the River). He preached a message of courage and peace, and in 1020 CE disappeared into the waters of the *Sindhu* (Indus)[v] from which he is believed to have emerged. His name has been kept alive through the centuries by Sufism and poetry, as in the popular song *Damadam mast Qalandar*:

Ho lal meri pat rakhio sada Jhuley Lalan, Oh protect me forever, *Jhuley Lal,*
Sindhri Das, Sire of Sindh *Sehwan Das,* Sire of Sehwan,
Sakhi Shahbaz Qalandar... Generous Shahbaz Qalander[vi]...
Charon Charagh tere balaan hameshan, Your shrine be always lit with four lamps,
Panjwan mein balaan. And the fifth be lit by me...[vii]

Of the numerous shrines dedicated to him in Sindh, the most important are at Sukkur at Udero Lal[viii] and at Tando Adam, where it is flanked by a mosque on its right and a Hindu *Joat* temple on its left.

Finally, it is important to draw a parallel between *Udero Lal*, and *Hizir* (*Khwaja Khidr*), who may well be one of the oldest gods of the Middle East—pre-Muslim, pre-Christian, pre-Roman, pre-Greek—a vegetation god and a water deity. The Turkish name *Hizir* is transliterated from the Arabic *Al-Kidr*, meaning literally, 'The Green One' or 'The Green Man.' The Jews call him *Hudr*; the Persians, *Kisir*. He is the last-minute rescuer, when all other assistance, natural and supernatural, has failed. He is mentioned in the Qur'an as the unnamed servant of God who initiated Moses into the mysteries of life. A tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recorded in Bukhari states that *Al-Khidr* was so called because if he sat on barren land, it turned green with vegetation.[ix]

Jhuley Lal Bera-paar![x] '*Jhuley Lal*, assure a safe journey!'

i. *Jhula*: cradle. According to folklore, the infant *Jhuley Lal* was able to make his cradle swing.
ii In Sindh, this fish is referred to as *palla* the fruit of the Indus River which (like salmon), swims against the tide.
iii. This 'river god' is known by various names—*Dulah Lal, Amar Lal, Lal Sain, Zinda Pir, Khwaja Khidr, Darya Shah*—and is worshipped throughout Sindh and Punjab and in many parts of India. Shah, Shahid *Ancient Communal Love* The News International http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/aug2004-weekly/nos-01-08-2004/kol html
iv. Khubchandani, Lachman K., *The Supernatural in Nature* Sindhi Tradition http://www.ignca.nic.in/ps_01006.html
v. The ancient cult of the Indus River god was once the main religio of the people of Sindh, who believed that their land was th daughter of the Indus, created and sustained by the mighty river
vi. Born 1177 CE as Syed Muhammad Usman in Marwand, Iran, settle at Sehwan, Sindh.
vii. The festival of *Jhuley Lal* is celebrated by setting afloat in a pond o river, a little boat bearing a lit lamp.
viii. A secular building constructed in memory of *Jhuley Lal* by Emper Shah Jahan in the 17th c. http://www.nipa-khi.edu.pk/murlidhar.p
ix. Walker, Warren S. and Uysal, Ahmet E., *An Ancient God in Mode Turkey: Some Aspects of the Cult of Hizir* Journal of American Folklore (1973) Texas University, Lubbock, Texas http://khidr.org/hizir.ht
x. *Bera*: ship, *paar*: across.

Figure 3. (Right) Jhuley Lal poster

The iconography is typical of Hindu deities and in addition has Mu symbols of the Qur'an, the Ka'aba and Masjid-e Nabvi. Handwritte Urdu is 'Pani ke Badshah' (King of Water) and 'Hazrat' (Prophet) Kh Khidr al-Islam. (Reduced from 27.9x43.2 cm)

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the point is that we carry around a lot of unawareness of the breadth, depth/height within ourselves. The Islamic *nafs*, or the 'unconscious' of modern depth psychology, are complex and layered concepts containing positive and negative aspects. The journey into these dimensions is not so much about fun/relaxation/sightseeing but more about perils, deceit, obstacles, risks. Akin to dreaming, it is about in-sight (seeing), encountering one's demons—and hopefully an angel or two. These figures, in what is ultimately the depths of one's self, and the symbols associated with them (lotus, fish, rose) hint at positive possibilities meant to give us courage in this 'downward' travel which has been referred to as the 'Night Sea Journey', 'the dark night of the soul'. The successful emergence from these depths leads to a different understanding of who one is, a reconfiguring of the ego which is now anchored, so to speak, in a deeper awareness of life. The green colour associated with *Khidr* etc., becomes emblematic of a psycho-spiritual fertility and (re)birth. Only now can the next stage of the next journey commence, which, as always, is here, on earth—and often accompanied by a trial through fire.

The martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS) and the Battle of Karbala are very physical narratives. They speak of the earth and heat/fire: land, rivers and boundaries, bloody battle, parched soil, the human body in pain, extreme heat, suffering. Beyond their nobility of lineage and the struggle of martyrs for justice, the riderless *Zuljinnah* becomes a symbol of the potential nobility of the human psyche or *nafs* in its innate capacity for discernment and justice, best understood in Rumi's definition as 'giving each thing its proper place'. In the image of *Zuljinnah*, the hero narrative comes full circle in the idea of death. This inevitable reality is the beginning of all mythology and the symbolic imagination since, by definition, death cannot be 'known' literally. The symbolic can never be fully explained and the aspect of mystery in the images, what we call a 'sense of the sacred', is intimately connected with the ultimate mystery which is death.

Each of the three images carries distinct and diverse historical, cultural and religious referents and speak of different types of journeys. Yet, they conceptually converge into an archetypal unity. Viewed as a triptych, they become visual panels/milestones of the hero myth as a whole, speaking of the cycle of human life and consciousness: birth, death and (re)birth. One does not have to be a believer to accept the idea of rebirth. Earth to earth, dust to dust, nevertheless, life begins anew. But for those who do believe, the images become a reminder of the final journey into the unknown.

The widespread and longstanding nature of these images in the cultural and popular imagination indicate the immutability of what they refer to, and the many layers of meaning they communicate. By becoming indelibly associated with travel, they bear witness to the exquisitely logical wisdom of the transpersonal and the symbolic. Over-the-top and in-your-face—lavishly embellished winged creatures, old men floating on a fish holding a rose—the visuals self evidently proclaim that they cannot be taken literally. In the rising sea of religious literalism threatening to engulf us, these vivid images defiantly continue to point past themselves to an unknown, mysterious domain. Still regularly—generously—available to our (in)sight, they potentially offer the viewer reconnections to the archetypal, cultural and spiritual roots of the psyche.

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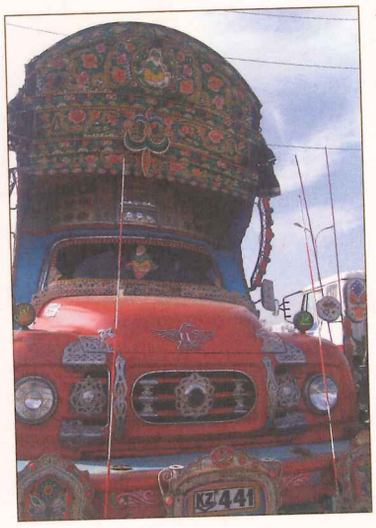

Figure 4. Stickers of Jhuley Lal on the crown and windshield of a truck.

Figure 5. Zuljinnah & Buraq
Poster from the vicinity of the shrine of Data Darbar, Lahore. (Reduced from 85x58 cm)

The foreground of this poster is dominated by the Buraq on the right and the Zuljinnah on the left. The Buraq appears to be trotting over water sprinkled with flowers; it displays the typical features associated with it: earrings and crown, tasselled adornments on the ankles, colourful wings, an intricately patterned carpet-like saddle-cloth. The Zuljinnah is the steed that Imam Hussain (AS) rode in the Battle of Karbala. The empty saddle signifies his martyrdom while the wounded horse is shown with arrows piercing its body; the felled 'alam' or standard in green is symbolic of the unwarranted defeat mourned annually in the month of Muharram.

Depicted within a crescent occupying the centre is the Masjid-e Nabvi (Prophet Muhammad's Mosque, Madinah) and the Holy Ka'aba. On the left of the crescent is the shrine of Imam Hussain (AS) and on the right is Masjid al-Aqsa, the 'Farthest Mosque'. The architectural images are photographs, perhaps meant to denote the 'physicality' of the tangible structures. The star-spangled night sky and the day sky have three roses suspended in air with 'Ya Allah', 'Ya Muhammad' and 'Hazrat Imam Hussain' superimposed in calligraphy.

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4. See also 30: 21–28 and 5: 49–51.

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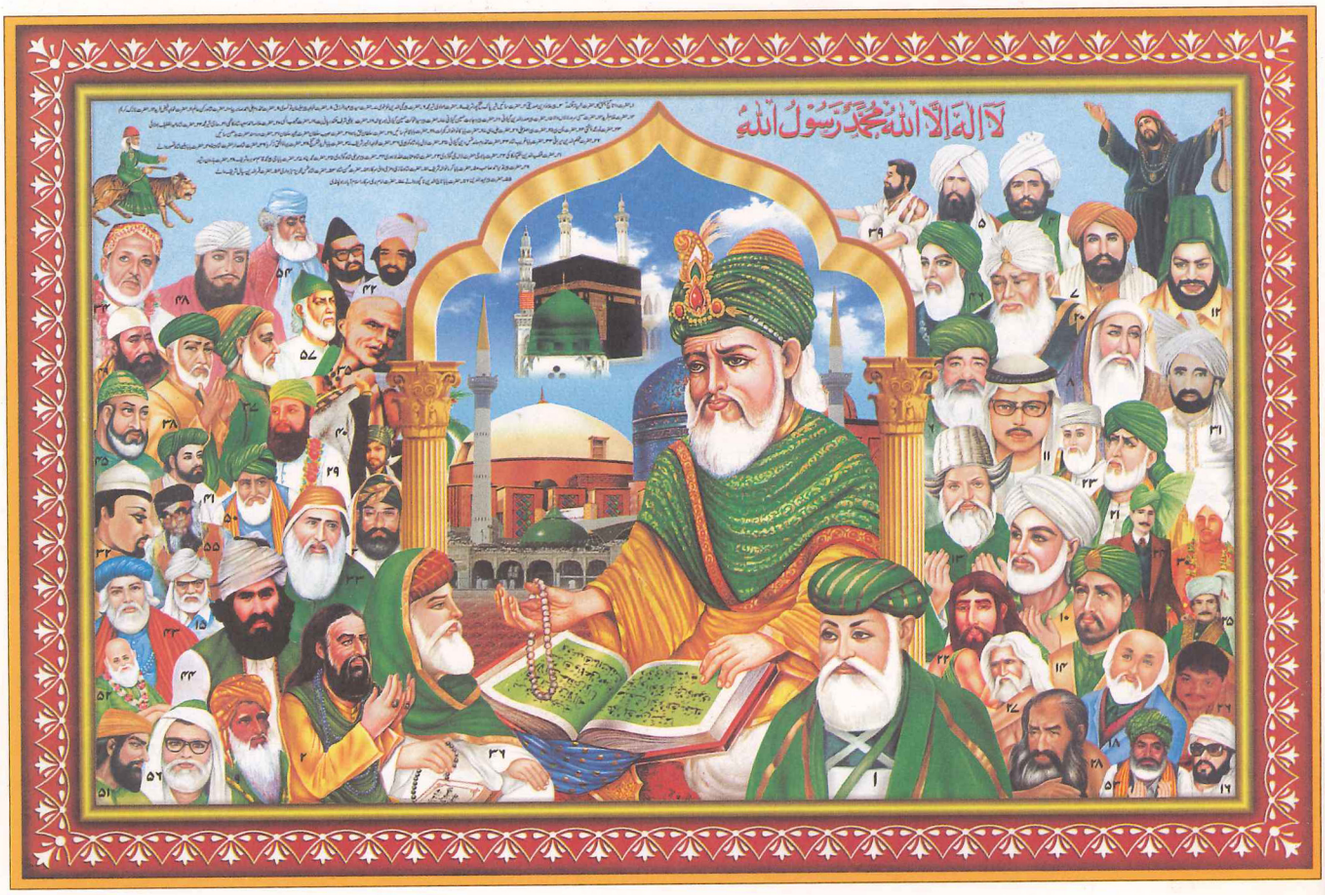

Rehmat ka Sayah THE SHADOW OF MERCY
Glimpses of Muslim Saints' Portraits

JÜRGEN WASIM FREMBGEN

SUFISM

Sufism or Islamic mysticism is a movement of devotion and divine rapture focusing on spiritual experiences. The Sufi tradition represents the multi-faceted inner dimension of Islam, that is to say the esoteric side of this universal religion. It focuses on the emotional realization of the presence and power of God. Guided by a spiritual master, Sufis and dervishes are seekers of God who walk on the mystical path, moving from one stage of ascetic and moral discipline to the next. Originating in the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the model of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Sufism constitutes a particular creative, liberal dimension of Islam characterised by practised tolerance, humanism, peace, and the accommodation of differences.

In the lowland provinces of Punjab and Sindh, Muslim saints are depicted in colourful paintings, posters and photographs which are the focus of 'lived' devotion within different mystically inspired currents of Pakistani Islam.[1,2] Such 'personality pictures' are sacred objects containing *barakat* (blessing power), bestowing *khayr* (prosperity), providing *rehmat ka sayah* (shadow of mercy) and serving as important media for popular piety. Allowing a visual invocation of the depicted holy men, these devotional images with their dense symbolism create a religious dimension in everyday life, providing a sense of personal spiritual direction and familiarity with the world of saints. A devotee can enter into face-to-face contact with his *murshid* (spiritual guide) and receive his spiritual gaze; such a visual contemplation of a saint is considered to be accompanied by a transfer of blessings.

This world of the Sufi saints is perhaps most impressively visualized in a well known colourful composition in which the major holy men venerated in Pakistan are depicted in the form of a *mehfil-e auliya*, an 'assembly of the friends of God'.[3,4] *Figure 1* is a modern variation showing fifty-seven numbered saints surrounding Abdul Qadir Jilani, the great saint of Baghdad, founder of the Qadiriyya order and undisputed *qutb* (literally 'axis') of the saintly universe. Unlike other versions of this particular composition, the most prominent Indo-Muslim saints not only stand out here because of their height, but are also depicted at the feet of the Hazrat Pir-e Dastgir, a sobriquet of Abdul Qadir Jilani meaning 'the spiritual guide who takes you by the hand'. As the depicted holy men lived between the eleventh and the twenty-first centuries of the Common Era, this formal gathering is imaginary in character, termed in Urdu a *khayali mehfil*. The majority of the painted depictions have been cut-out by the collage artist from other earlier created posters; only a few are photographs of contemporary persons. *Figure 2* is an example of a realistic portrait of the living saint Sakhi Lajpal Hazrat Irshad Hussain Shah, a Qalandar saint who lives at the foot of the Koh-e Mastan near the village of Nurpur (in the vicinity of the capital city Islamabad).

Figure 1. This poster is an imaginary assembly of fifty-seven Indo-Muslim saints who lived between the eleventh and the present centuries. Abdul Qadir Jilani is seated in the centre reading the Holy Qur'an, framed by a multi-cusped arch with the powerful icons of Makkah and Madinah along with the saint's mausoleums in both Baghdad and Hujwiri (Lahore). The majority of the painted depictions have been cut-out by the collage artist from other earlier created posters; only a few are photographs of contemporary persons.
(Reduced from 85x58 cm)

In this contribution, I would like to focus on the public display of these devotional pictures in saints' shrines as well as in shops. Whereas usually single portraits of holy men (or at best two or three of them) are put up on a wall at home or in a shop, at times a series of pictures are exhibited as 'in a gallery'. To avoid describing this phenomenon by the inadequate Western notion of a 'gallery' or 'art salon', I initially used the term 'sacred assemblage' to analyse the power and aura of such ensembles of material objects in Muslim shrines, thereby borrowing from art history.[5] Although assemblages of pictures at wrestling arenas, magic shows at *melas* (festivals), in tea shops, carrom board and billiard halls, barber shops, Shi'a places of ritual mourning, and, of course, shrines of Indo-Muslim saints convey the impression of a *tasvir-khana*, this Urdu translation of the word 'gallery' is not used in the vernacular. Although people are aware of the aesthetic spaces created by *mazhabi tasavir* (religious depictions), *pir baba ke tasavir* (depictions of holy men), *tughras* (religious verses or names in calligraphy) and *aksi tasavir* (photographs), they generally refrain from categorizing them through other generic terms. However, in the world of vernacular Islamic shrines, local guardians and caretakers as well as dervishes and devotees at times spontaneously refer to assemblages of a sacred character as *rehmat ka sayah*, 'the shadow of mercy', thereby emphasizing the specific aura of devotional pictures. Thus, to sit in a room adorned with portraits of Muslim holy men means that the devotees and pilgrims are in the presence of the saints, shaded and thereby protected by their mercy and compassion.

In addition to their ritual function of transferring *barakat* and stimulating piety, assemblages of devotional pictures (including Qur'anic verses in calligraphy, depictions of Makkah and Madinah, etc.) create a particular aesthetic dimension through emphasizing colour and being usually displayed in the upper zones of a room (religiously considered to be pure) often leaving no void space. The devotee looking up to admire them is fascinated and feels himself seated at the feet of the 'friends of God'. The world unfolding in these popular visuals is mostly *khayali* (imaginary), showing the saints conveying specific Islamic values of piety, referring to miracles or leading into angelic dream-like settings—thus, heightening the devotee's imagination. He might extol the virtues of his spiritual guide and narrate his dreams in which the saint appears as a saviour.[6] To quote Bruce Kapferer: *'The aesthetic object frames individual experience, sets it in motion, and establishes the context of his experiencing'*.[7] The same holds true for actual photographs, which are increasingly found in these picture ensembles.

Votive installations of saints' portraits are mostly found at smaller shrines of holy men belonging to the Qalandari, Chishti or Qadri orders. Usually, these shrines are not controlled by the Ministry of Auqaf, (institution officially administering Sufi shrines as well as religious endowments) and custodians and *mujawir/mutawalli* (attendants) are consequently more flexible in displaying figurative images in the public, thereby circumventing purist iconoclastic tendencies otherwise found in religious domains. Within the architectural complex of a Sufi lodge, devotional pictures are particularly displayed in spaces adjacent to the inner sanctuary of the holy man, such as the *baithak* (sitting place) or the *langar*

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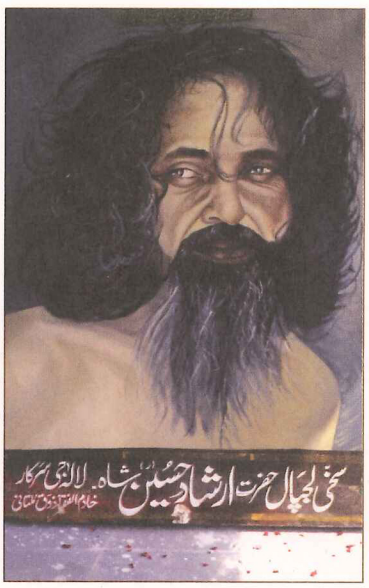

Figure 2. Hand painted portrait of the living Qalandar saint Sakhi Lajpal Hazrat Irshad Hussain Lala Ji Sarkar painted by his devotee Zauq Multani in 2005, showing the holy man at a young age. (Oil on metalsheet).

Figure 3. Sacred assemblage of devotional photographs and posters arranged by Sain Salim, at the entrance of the shrine of Sakhi Shah Jahan in Rawalpindi. This is an open-air assemblage of framed photographs—mainly depicting his living murshid *Phulonwale Sarkar, who is a devotee of the famous Qalandar saint Barri Imam (d.1705/1706).*

Figure 4. Mural paintings depicting Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and Baba Taj Sain at the shrine of the Majzub Baba Taj Sain (d.1994), in Lahore, painted by the mujawir *and electrician, Muhammad Azam, show the white-bearded and turbaned Qalandar alongside a small depiction of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai and two large-sized paintings of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar copied from posters.*

Figure 5. A view of the baithak *of a female saint Apaji Sarkar near Abbottabad, 2005. This shows a poster depicting Abdul Qadir Jilani (flanked by framed decorative embroideries of flowers), with paintings of the turbaned Sayyid Ayub Shah and of his elder brother Sayyid Jabbar Shah (wearing a Qalandar patchwork cap). They were both Pirs of the resident female saint.*

Figure 6. Portraits of the Qalandar saints Mama Ji Sarkar (right) and Baba Lal Shah (left) at a shrine in Rawalpindi, painted by Sayyid Ishrat.

(space for the distribution of free food), but also in the courtyard or outside on a tree, thereby, acquiring the character of a signboard. During a religious festival, a dervish may mark and embellish his *dera* (tent, camp, place of residence) with framed poster-portraits. Furthermore, places where the saint used to stay in his lifetime, called *maqam, chilla* or *yadgar,* can be decorated with assemblages of votive objects and pictures. In case of living saints, their actual *baithak* is often lavishly adorned with posters and photographs. In shops, a particular space, often close to the owner's seat or above the counter, is reserved for blessing by the 'shadow of mercy'. The portraits are preferably framed, though in more casual places like urban gambling dens, tea shacks or hang-outs of *malangs* adjacent to shrines, they may remain unframed, representing an inexpensive, albeit respected commodity which, with the passage of time, gets torn. Destroyed prints are substituted by new ones. Within such vivid contexts of popular religiosity, change is a continuous phenomenon. In the parlance of modern art history we could emphasize that such installations are projects in progress; posters are exchanged for new prints or photographs, images are decorated with fresh flower garlands, murals are painted over, votive objects are added or removed, spaces and artifacts are rearranged.

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I would like to highlight a few remarkable sacred assemblages depicting predominantly modern-day Qalandar saints and their followers. Thus, Sain Salim established some years ago a *baithak* at the entrance of the shrine of the seventeenth century saint Sakhi Shah Jahan (popularly known as Shah ki Thalian) in Rawalpindi *(Figure 3)*. Its outstanding feature is an open-air assemblage of framed photographs—mainly depicting his living *murshid* Phulonwale Sarkar. They are stored away for the night and daily rearranged in a ritual of devotion. In other more institutionalised settings framed pictures displayed in open spaces are permanently fixed and protected by resident attendants. Occasionally, there are also mural paintings, for instance at the shrine of the Majzub Baba Taj Sain (d.1994) in Lahore *(Figure 4)*. An indoor ensemble of saints' portraits is exemplified in the *baithak* of Apaji Sarkar, a *majzuba* (female ascetic) living near Abbottabad. Compared with a photograph of the same room and its wall decoration taken in October 2001, the present view, which was documented four years later, shows a completely new arrangement *(Figure 5)*.[8]

In another sacred assemblage, I found in a butcher's shop of Chaudhry Munna in Jika Gali (near Murree)

where a whole wall was decorated with images of Sayyid Lal Badshah (1906–1967 CE), popularly known as Baba Lal Shah and of his son Sayyid Fida Husain Shah (d.1977 CE). Both were ascetic saints living in the tradition of Barri Imam in the Murree hills. The latter had also been the spiritual guide of the Majzub Mama Ji Sarkar (d.1991 CE) whose portraits decorate the *langar* of his shrine in Rawalpindi *(Figure 6)*.[9] A number of the saint's photographs are displayed, in a narrow glass cabinet, by his devotee Nisar Ahmad, a *paan* (betel leaf) and cigarette vendor in Rawalpindi's Raja Bazaar *(Figure 7)*. The last example *(Figure 8)* shows framed photographs and *urs* (death anniversary) posters which were put up on a banyan tree functioning as a signboard to direct passersby to the adjacent shrine.

All these paintings, posters, and photographs depicting Indo-Muslim saints are sacred objects expressing meaning and power through their specific symbolism, holy verses and names in calligraphy, and visual content. Within a gallery-like public display they create an aura of sanctity stimulating individual as well as collective forms of devotion. They mediate a unity of spiritual and aesthetic experiences particularly to those who deeply trust in God and the saints and 'think with their heart'. They also serve as a statement of religious identity, linking up the deceased or live saint, or the devotee himself with other sacred personages. Particularly within the realm of the *Qalandariyya*, they can be explained as visualizations of the hierarchical relations among saints as well as of their networked subculture in general.[10] Very importantly they serve as a vehicle to promote belief in the Sufi masters. Thus, these memorial images are powerful iconic symbols embedded in the emotional and practised forms of popular Islam.

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Figure 7. Photographs of saints displayed, in a narrow glass cabinet by devotee Nisar Ahmad, a paan (betel leaf) and cigarette vendor in Raja Bazaar, Rawalpindi.

Figure 8. Images and urs posters put up on a banyan tree, functioning as a signboard to direct passersby to the adjacent shrine of Chishti-Qadri saint Baba Lasuri Shah (d.1957 CE) in Faisalabad city.

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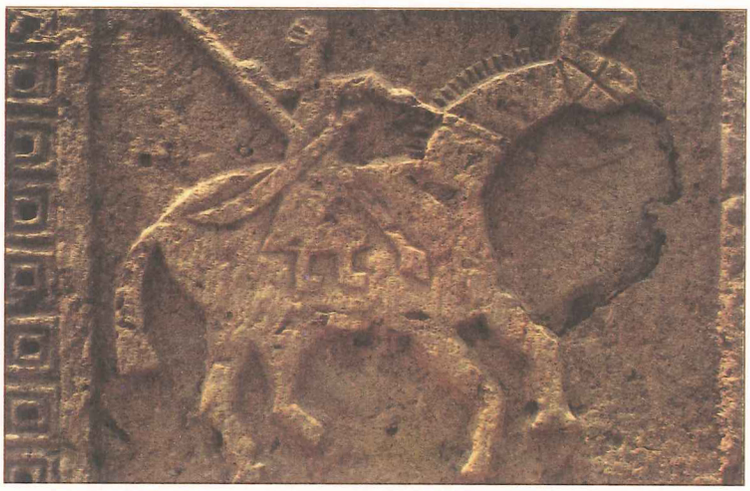

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شری پابوجی راٹھور
(بھرج والا)
ڈاکٹر مرلی لال نیارام، ڈاکٹر گوبند رام نیارام — صادق آباد / ڈھرکی (سندھ)

HORSEMEN AND SAVIOURS

Iconography in Hindu Communities of Twentieth Century Sindh

MICHEL BOIVIN

The horseman as a saviour is a common icon in several religious traditions. In Christianity, in the Apocalypse of Saint John, it is stated that Christ will reappear on a white horse to save humanity. Similarly, in some Muslim traditions, especially from the Shi'a persuasion, the awaited saviour or *mahdi*[i] will ride a white horse to rescue mankind and restore peace and justice in the world. In Hinduism, the horse-mounted warrior is a recurrent theme in different sacred scriptures such as the Bhagavad Gita; in the Vishnuite tradition,[ii] the tenth incarnation of the god, named *Kalki* or *Naklanki*, will appear riding a white horse.

This chapter provides some insight into the relationship between the worship of horsemen as saviours and the identity of Hindu communities in twentieth century Sindh.[iii] The depiction of horsemen *(Figures 1&2)* is a well known topic in Sindh as well as in the adjoining areas such as Balochistan, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Several categories of soteriological[iv] figures like the Jakhs[v] and the Bhomiyos[vi] are highly venerated; however, in Sindh the horsemen were not necessarily a focus of worship. For example, the Chaukundi tombs show a variety of horsemen in relief, the oldest representations dating back to the middle of the fifteenth century[1] with a pinnacle occurring at the turn of the seventeenth century. The riders are shown with weapons such as arrows, bows, quivers, swords, shields and spears. They wear shoes and caps while their horses have stirrups, reins and saddles. It is possible to speak of a genuine tradition of horsemen representation in Sindh as it is believed that a workshop in Thatta produced the carvings from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, after which the Kalhoras[vii] issued a law forbidding the carving of pictures.

A comparative approach regarding three horsemen saviours *viz.* Darya Pir, Rama or Ramdeo Pir and Pithoro

i. *Mahdi*: 'The Guided One'.
ii. One of the principal traditions of Hinduism, with particular devotion to Vishnu, preserver of the universe.
iii. One of the four provinces of Pakistan.
iv. The doctrine of salvation.
v. Mysterious horsemen who are worshipped in Kutch, in the Indian State of Gujarat; see Mallison 2003.
vi. Local heroes of Rajasthan who are venerated after their death.
vii. Kalhora Dynasty ruled Sindh between 1707 and 1783 CE.

Hinduism is a set of beliefs and practices which are included in sacred scriptures such as the Vedas, the Puranas, the Bhagavad Gita, and others. They also feature the structure of society which is based on the caste system. In Sindh, Hinduism was never strictly followed maybe because the Brahmans, or priest class, were not very powerful and Hindus adapted their religion to the local Sindhi culture. They worshipped local deities like Udero Lal and also visited Muslim shrines like those of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. Today, the Hindu society of Sindh is nevertheless divided between the 'Hindu jatis' or the honourable castes, and the Scheduled or 'impure' castes.

Figure 1. Horseman carved in relief on a tombstone at the Sonda graveyard, District Thatta, c. Fifteenth–seventeenth century.

The rider is shown wearing a headdress carrying a spear or lance in one hand, while holding the reins of the horse in the other. A sword is prominently hanging on the side of the horseman.

Figure 2. Pabuji Rathore
Poster from Sri Chand Mandir, Thatta.
(Reduced from 85x58 cm)

Pabuji Rathore from Marwar, was born in the fifteenth century. He was recognised as a saviour because he devoted himself to the cause of the downtrodden, and was later eulogised as a saint. He is shown here riding a richly caparisoned black horse and carrying a lance with a red and white standard. His high caste is shown by the opulent attire and the parasol above his head.

Handwritten Sindhi script in the poster identifies Pabuji and the figures represented e.g. following the saviour is 'Sri Demoji Boghilas' (carrying a fly whisk), and leading in front is 'Sri Chandoji', both high caste Hindus. A herd of cows illustrated near the right top corner, close to the head of the horse is a reminder that he died while defending them. Inscribed below, on the left, in white, are the names of two devotees Dr Murali Lal Panyaram and Dr Gobind Ram Panyaram, from Sadiqabad/Dharki, Sindh; also seen is the signature of 'Suchyari Art' under the front left hoof of the horse.

Pabuji Rathore is not mentioned in the main text of this essay.

Pir will be adopted; their similarities and differences will be highlighted, and the extent to which a common pattern was used and later modified to suit circumstances will be explored.

DARYA PIR

Darya Pir is the oldest attested horseman as saviour in Sindh *(Figure 3)*. According to tradition, he emerged from the Indus River close to a town on the outskirts of a forest to deliver the Hindu people from the tyranny of a Muslim king. He is usually depicted as a young warrior riding a horse, holding a sword in the right hand, and a flag in the left.

Another version of Darya Pir is Udero Lal, the name given to him as an old ascetic, often seated on a fish *(see also p. 7)*; his main sanctuary is in a place located north of Hyderabad.[2]

Darya Pir and Udero Lal were worshipped by high Hindu castes, especially the Lohanas who controlled trade before the partition of the subcontinent and thereafter migrated in large numbers to India.

Another image of Darya Pir *(Figure 4)* embroidered on fabric—a medium rarely used for this purpose—can be found in Thatta at Sri Chand's *mandir* (temple), which comprises, as is often the case in Sindh, many *ashrams* or small chapels dedicated to other charismatic figures. Sri Chand is believed to be Guru Nanak's son; this Hinduistic form of religion which prevailed in Sindh, is a blend of Nanakshahism[i] and Daryapanthism. The former had followers of Guru Nanak while the latter those of Udero Lal.

PITHORO PIR

Pithoro Pir is mainly worshipped by the Meghwars, an outcaste Hindu community. Tradition has it that he defended outcaste communities by defeating a Hindu Rajput king. In the pictorial or sculptural form, Pir Pithoro is always on a horse which is standing still, or pawing the ground. In the majority of the representations, the horse is white; it may also be light blue, the usual colour of the mare of Goga Pir.[ii] In all cases, the horse is richly caparisoned.

Pithoro Pir is always shown with a beard and a black moustache *(Figure 5)*. His forehead may be adorned with the *tilak* (a mark). The colour of his clothing varies and may be orange, red, blue, pink or white. He may be wearing a helmet *(Figure 6)*. He is usually without any weapon in official pictures, making a gesture of greeting or peace with the right hand.

RAMA PIR

Ramdeo Pir or Rama Pir is worshipped mainly by the Bhils and by other outcaste communities. The protector of the untouchable castes, he

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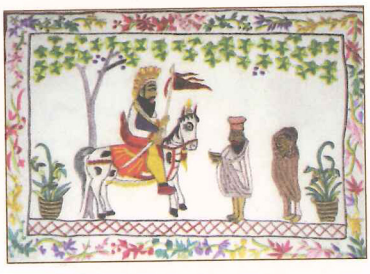

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Figure 3. Darya Pir, a painting in progress at Udero Lal's mandir, *November 2005.*

In a simplified representation of the classic model, he is shown here as a young warrior riding a horse, holding a sword in his right hand. He is met by a figure who presents him with a jewel; another renunciant is dressed in a skin of leopard.

Figure 4. Darya Pir as embroidered on a fabric at Sri Chand's mandir *in Thatta, November 2005.*

Figure 5. The classical representation of Pithoro Pir riding a white horse, holding a lance in his right hand, Pithoro, October 2004.

i. They are not usually included in mainstream Sikh religion as they do not incorporate the *Khalsa (see also p. 282)* e.g. they do not wear the turban or the beard.

ii. A divinized hero, revered as Gogal Vir in Sindh. Some traditions claimed he was initiated by Udero Lal.

defended them against the Hindu upper castes. He is worshipped in a *mandir* located at Tando Allahyar, north of Hyderabad, not far from Pithoro and Udero Lal;[3] other small *ashrams*, dedicated to him, locally known as *thans*, are located near Matiari, and in Karachi. A traditional representation of Ramdeo Pir shows him holding a lance (never a sword) or a flag while raising his right hand in greeting (*Figures 7&8*).

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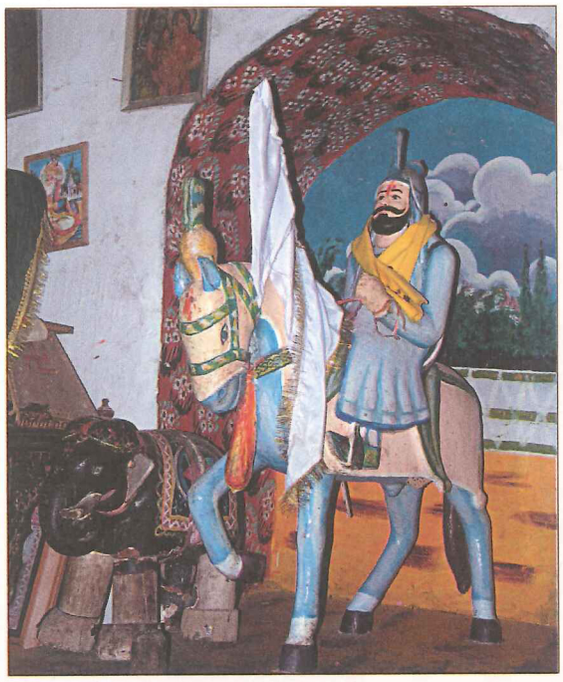

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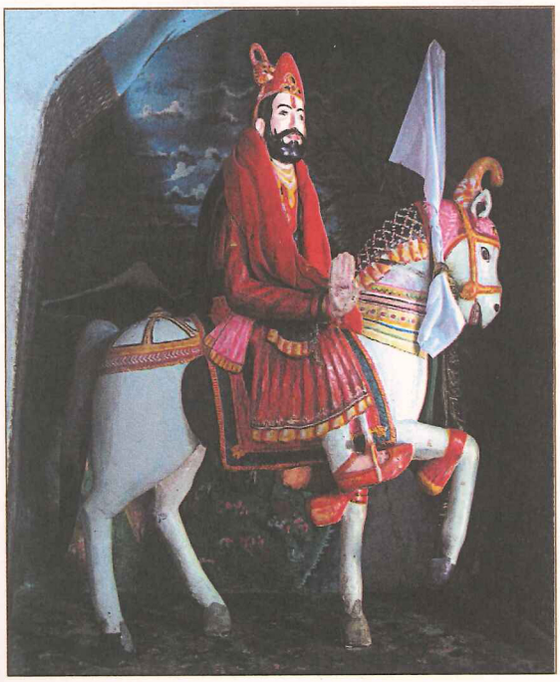

Figure 6. An equestrian statue of Pithoro Pir, Singh Bawani's mandir, *Makli, District Thatta, 2007.*

This statue in Makli shows a very interesting feature: it is placed in front of a reinforcement in the wall which looks like a 'mihrab', a niche in a mosque indicating the direction of the Ka'aba.

Figure 7. An equestrian statue of Ramdeo Pir, Singh Bawani's mandir, *Makli, District Thatta, 2007.*

A COMPARISON OF THE SAVIOURS

These saviours are certainly warriors; in addition, they are equipped with royal attributes such as the crown. The head of Ramdeo Pir is surrounded by an aureole, whereas that of Pithoro Pir is not always so. An identifying symbol of Pithoro Pir is a standard, which is white with a red edge, constellated with red stars, a full red circle (sun or full moon) and a red crescent. These symbols are also used in Ramdeo Pir's flag, but his main identity marker are the footprints. Rama Pir is the only one with a parasol.

The similarity in iconography suggests that these figures were drawn from a unique standardized model, the origin of which is uncertain. The traditions nevertheless echo regional or local historical events. For instance, the name Pithoro refers to Rai Pithora, the Hindu king defeated by the Ghurid Sultan Muizz-uddin in 1192 CE, before the emergence of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206 CE.

It is thus probable that local heroes were divinized by different communities at different periods, and ascribed a role on the historical scene. These communities, through changes in details such as colour, weapons, the landscape or other characters of the scene, appropriated crucial events into their history. Iconography enriched by devotional literature and rituals was one among other social and cultural expressions by which they identified themselves.

A point to be highlighted is that the symbols in use are now attributed to an institutionalized religion, either Hinduism or Islam. The followers of the three divinized heroes are usually classified as Hindus; however, some of their identifying symbols could be considered Islamic. These include the crescent and the star, found on the flags of both Pithoro Pir and Ramdeo Pir but not on that of Darya Pir. Thus a cleavage between divinized heroes of the high Hindu castes and those of outcastes can be observed here, with Muslim symbols more in use by the saviours of the latter. It is probable that the outcaste communities

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CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAVIOURS' FEATURES

NAME	DARYA PIR	PITHORO PIR	RAMA PIR
Devotees' Caste	*Lohanas*	*Meghwars*	*Bhils*
Status	*Twice Born*	*Outcaste*	*Outcaste*
Heroic action	*Hindus v. Muslims*	*Outcastes v. Hindus*	*Outcastes v. Hindus*
Weapons	*Sword*	*Sword, lance*	*Lance*
Royal attributes	*Crown*	*Crown*	*Crown, parasol*
Standard	*No specific feature*	*Crescent, stars.*	*Crescent, stars, footprints*
Period of life	*11th Century*	*15th Century*	*15th Century*
Historical events	*Beginning of Somra Rule, the first Sindhi dynasty*	*The Sodha king Hamir defeated the Somras and ruled Umarkot*	

Figure 8. Ramdeo Pir's poster

This poster depicts Ramdev, Ramdeo or Rama Pir, the protector of the untouchables, a Tanwer Rajput born in the fifteenth century. He is seen riding a white horse, with a parasol and an aureole surrounding his head, carrying a red and white standard bearing his identifying symbol, a pair of red footprints. The oval frames in the upper half of the poster show the many miracles attributed to him, the first being his birth—an 'appearance' in the cradle of his elder brother Viramdev—while the third shows his rescue of a boy bitten by a snake. In the lower part of the poster is the grave into which he 'descended' at the end of his life; he was buried, as opposed to being cremated, as per Hindu tradition.

Figure 9. Ramdeo Pir's representation at the temple of Tando Allahyar, April 1998.

Figure 10. Rani's Well Temple, Patan, India, January 2004.

Kalki or Naklanki, *the tenth incarnation of the god in the Vishnuite tradition, appearing on a white horse to save humanity.*

before colonization and perhaps until partition were 'neither Hindoos nor Muslims.'[4]

The traditions of the saviour can be traced in both Hinduism and Islam. According to an ancient Khoja (a Gujrati-speaking Shi'a community) tradition, now forgotten, a synthesis was proposed: *Naklanki (Figure 10)*, the tenth incarnation of the god in the Vishnuite tradition, and *mahdi*, the saviour in some Muslim traditions, were merged into a single figure. This is also a feature of the 'neither...nor' communities which shape 'bicephalous' saviours through the use of a Hindu and a Muslim name for a single case. It allows both communities to appropriate the charisma of the figure, to frame an identity of their own, and importantly to ensure social harmony.

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1–2.

M. IMRAN QURESHI & NAAZISH ATA-ULLAH

THE SEMIOTICS OF THE NATION'S ICONS
The Art of Truck and Miniature Painting

VISUAL CONTRIBUTION: M. IMRAN QURESHI
ESSAY: NAAZISH ATA-ULLAH

The trajectory of visual art in Pakistan is one of multiple transitions. It spans and internalizes the wider discourses of colonialism, nationalism and international modernism; it relates to visual traditions in the light of postmodernism and seeks to validate its position in the contemporary arena of visual art making.

Artists are thus sited between the political realities of their times and the collective, largely constructed, and yet elusive memory of a glorious past; and more recently, the co-option of geopolitical identity as a prerequisite for a neo-exotic postmodern marketable space. Artists are the bearers of a cultural soul that is both enriched and at odds with the paradoxes of tradition and modernity. They are positioned on the paradigm shift between modernity and the postmodern and what this entails with regards to practices of making, as well as perhaps, to identify and re-route the pathways of viewing between the Self and the Other.

The pedagogy that Pakistan inherited at Independence was one of the triumphs of the colonial state. Art and Design education policy under the British had shaped a curriculum that was based on the South Kensington School's teaching methodologies and principles. The founding principal John Lockwood Kipling, a sculptor who was also the author Rudyard Kipling's father, established the Mayo School of Art in Lahore, in 1875. Kipling's contribution to the Mayo School of Art and to the province of Punjab was in shaping a transformative visual vocabulary for traditional crafts such as woodcarving and pottery that became the vogue. His pioneering efforts in setting up the lithography department advanced the use of the printing press as an aid to visualizing and recording, nurtured traditional craftsmen such as Bhai Ram Singh and brought local and international recognition to The Mayo School of Art during his tenure. The revaluation of traditional craft within an educational framework is the inheritance from which contemporary miniature painting springs and remains a progeny of, with regards to many of its essential characteristics. The School was renamed the National College of Arts (NCA) in 1958 and reorganized as a School of Art, Design and Architecture along

Trucks, introduced in Karachi in the 1930s, were initially simply painted with a protective coat of one colour with the name of the truck company stencilled in a single colour. After Partition, in the 1950s, trade and port activities increased in the city and the economic prosperity of the 1960s ushered in a demand for transportation of goods. Gradually, the embellishment on trucks became elaborate, evolving into a popular art form, referred to as 'truck art'.

One of the claimants to the beginnings of truck decoration was Haji Hussain who came from a long line of *kamaangars* (bow-and-arrow makers), turned court painters in Kutch, Gujarat. At Partition he brought his skills in painting murals, decorative ceilings, and statuary to Karachi and added to the stencilled trucks images of birds, flower vases, a telephone with a woman's hand picking up the receiver on which the company's telephone number would be written. His sons, grandsons and former apprentices have carried on the tradition of *chitarkari* (the art of making pictures), painting trucks, sign writing or decorating furniture and decorative light panels all over Pakistan.

At present, the body of a typical truck is heavily decorated with a mixture of images, borders, sign writing and poetry. A variety of devices are used, ranging from enamel hand painted scenes, images and borders to filigree, layered and coloured perspex, fluorescent sticker patterns, reflectors, mirror work and inlaid wood. The decoration usually comprises a large single painting at the back, which may be that of a favourite film star, politician, mystic, dancing horse, the *Buraq*, a famous building, a sunset or a single flower. The interior is decorated with brocades encased in plastic, coloured lights, mirror work which can be seen as a king's throne room while the ceiling is adorned with interpretations of the *sheesh mahal* or the palace of mirrors, a favourite architectural device of Mughal kings. The structure above the cab, the *taj* or crown, recalls the *jharoka* or balcony from which the king would see and be seen. The palace became accessible to the new 'Kings of the Road' as truckers often write on their vehicles.[i]

Figure 1. A flying falcon painted on a truck. Written in a semicircle in Urdu is 'Cargo United Goods Transport Company Lahore', 2006.

Figure 2. WELL DIRECTED
Muhammad Zeeshan. Gouache on vasli, 2005. Size: 10x15 cm

i. KAZI, DURRIYA The Spirited Art of Truck Decoration in *City Volume 1, July 2002*, City Press, Karachi (pp. 64–74).

the principles of the Bauhaus. This reconstitution (of the NCA) resulted in an integrated curriculum, which ideologically distinguished it from the other educational institutions in Pakistan.

Since its inception the NCA has presented its self-image as a beacon of the avant-garde. However, the postcolonial condition has also determined the desire to forge a specific identity by revisiting and reinventing the celebrated precolonial past, but without the romanticism and nostalgia of the Indian nationalists such as Chughtai, who shared the technique of the Bengal School painters but whose rhetoric was self-consciously Muslim. The state's restricted solution to the predicament of national identity as constituted through the visual has been manifested through a patronage of identifiable 'Islamic' genres such as calligraphy. The NCA, in sharp contrast, has retained its freedom to examine the issue of identity through a broader lens. It is in this context that the development and spread of the contemporary or neo-miniature painting movement, which evolved at the NCA, simultaneously offers Pakistani artists an identifiable visual specificity as well as a space of infinite, intellectual and visual freedom.

Miniature painting was essentially a creative force in the iconography of subcontinental art until the breakdown of the patronage system under British rule. It dwindled into a decontextualized and therefore inherently weakened craft practice, the primary impetus of which became the preservation of a precolonial past. The paradigm shift in the ethos of the genre of miniature painting, with regards to the intent and the position of the artist, occurs at the NCA in the mid 1980s. This turning point is fundamental to the existence of the neo-miniature because it reconstitutes the miniature as a point of departure rather than as a dispossessed repetition of a distant practice. It also reconstitutes the practitioner's role firmly within the postmodern context.

In this sense perhaps miniature painting is one of the few practices that has bypassed modernism and is therefore freed of some of the ideological underpinnings of modernity. The inherent freedom of the artist as an appropriator of existing syntax suddenly occurs here without the baggage of conceptual frameworks that marked modernism.

The journey of a typical miniature painter is worth examining, as it is reflective of the movement as a whole from its inception to the present moment. In my view the trajectory of both individual practices and the genre as a whole is one that traverses the confinement of tradition and the freedom of play only to return paradoxically to a reconfigured practice that occupies a marginalized space which is inherently confined by its own discourse at one level. At another level miniature painting has transformed its own boundaries to the extent that the movement can be read as having dissolved within the greater space of art making today. However, I believe that the neo-miniature painting movement still exists as an identifiable voice in the postmodern space.

In its germinative stage the neo-miniature utilizes other iconographical traditions without the pressure of locating their original meaning or even constituting new meaning through the act of making. It is the use of secondary source material, appropriated randomly, that results in a

3.

Figure 3. The image of the Ghauri missile in vibrant colours is a frequent icon in truck art, celebrating the acquisition of nuclear power for the defence of the country.

Figure 4. FUN GAMES
M. Imran Qureshi
Siyah Qalam on vasli, 2004.
Size: 48.25x29.5 cm

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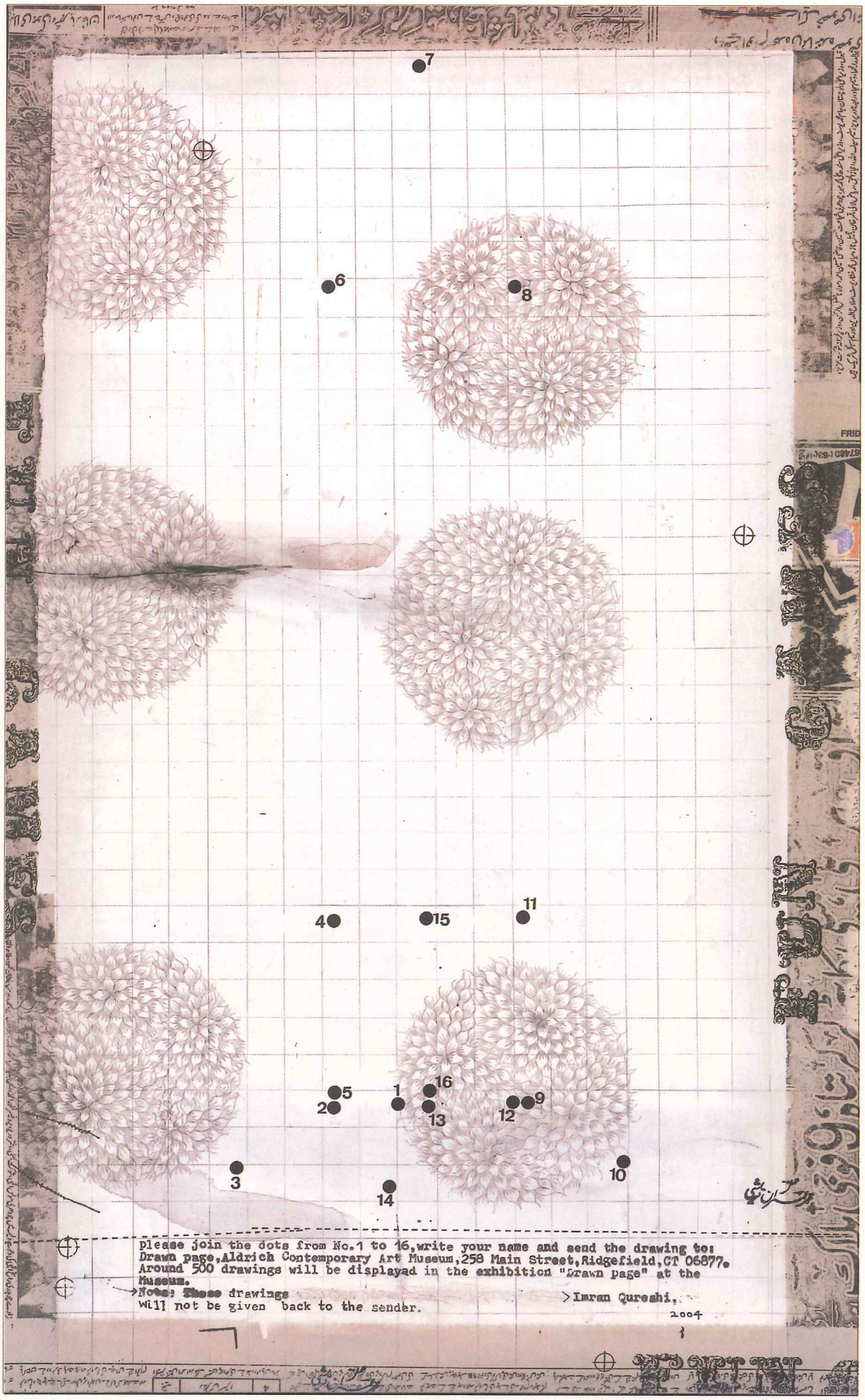
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please join the dots from No.1 to 16,write your name and send the drawing to:
Drawn page,Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum,258 Main Street,Ridgefield,CT 06877.
Around 500 drawings will be displayad in the exhibition "Drawn page" at the Museum.
Note: These drawings will not be given back to the sender.
>Imran Qureshi,
2004

strange democratization of iconography, which immediately broadens the horizons of possible interpretation as well as individual expression. It is this liberation from any cohesive responsibility with regards to the contextual underpinnings of appropriated imagery that places miniature painting in an exclusive space that is both inside and outside the postmodern discourse. It is also, however, by and large the very freedom of this indifference to context that eventually stifles the genre by blocking its pathways to generating meaning from its own created syntax. The constitution of meaning and identity then arrives from elsewhere and generates a practice that is potentially confined by a double gaze. There is a recurrence of imagery in neo-miniatures that echoes a certain exotic landscape, a stereotyping of Pakistani visual identity that indicates a manner of looking at the Self through the gaze of the Other. For example, the *burqa* (the veil) as an act of confinement, the missile as locus of identity, are perhaps identities formulated by the perceptual stereotyping of the outside viewer, in conflict with a more personal and direct engagement by the artist.

However the most stable inheritance of the new miniature is the sanctity and value of virtuosity. This, in effect, is the essence of the ideology of miniature painting that remains undisturbed despite the shifts that have occurred on the face of its outward practice. Sanctity of virtuosity and beauty has remained stable throughout the entire history of miniature painting. Moreover what remains stable within the dual and often oppositional/dichotomous gaze is what creates the value of the miniature that is its virtuosity. It is the sanctity of virtuosity that constitutes the miniature attitude, and what becomes the defining parameter of the miniature painter even when he leaves both traditional materials and traditional iconography behind. Linear narrative is another condition of traditional miniature painting which has remained a significant feature of the new miniature movement as a position of cultural value. Although this finds validity within the conscription of new narratives relevant to the current problematic of Pakistani identity, the miniature continues to tell a story. Viewed from the outside, the miniature as a desired object depends on the maintenance of both virtuosity and the narrativised image. The appreciation of virtuosity for its own sake serves the dual purpose of historicizing/exoticizing the miniature and locating its importance within fixed cultural parameters.

Contemporary miniature painting converges in interesting ways with other genres of cultural visual representation. The iconography of Pakistani popular art, found in its celebrated 'truck art', is often appropriated by miniature painters. The contrasting realities between the spontaneous compulsions for embellishment found in 'popular' art makers and the deliberated selectiveness, essential for the studio artist, coexist in predetermined sites. Whereas the truck painter repeatedly renders an iconography that recalls authenticity emanating from collective visual knowledge, the artist infuses meaning that has less tangible foundations. The naivety of depiction in imagery found in truck painting both tantalizes and appeals to a broad range of viewers. The sheer presence of the vehicle and its movement transfixes the viewer's gaze which, more often than not, is following in its tracks. Abundant with rich colour, pattern and detail,

Figure 5. Painted on the back of a truck is the portrait of a man within a rose frame. The name 'Malik Ghous Muhammad Awan Marhoom (late)' is written in red. Also signed 'Scenes by Nazir Khan artist', 'M. Iqbal Azad Painters, Sargodha Road, Khushab' and 'Calligrapher Nadeem Brothers, Khushab'. The mobile phone number of the painters is also inscribed. Lahore, 2006.

Figure 6. PATTERN TO FOLLOW
Aisha Khalid. Gouache on vasli, 2000. Size: 23x30 cm.

Figure 7. Roses painted on the taj *or crown (an extended front portion above the windscreen) of a truck, 2006.*

7.

the painter invariably focuses on a singular iconic motif drawn from culturally identifiable visual narratives. The imagined landscape of mountain streams and cypresses, roses and eagles, *houris*[i] and the *buraq*[ii], seeking relief from the mundane realities of ordinary lives, portrays desperation for a desired Utopia or a promised land. Urban visual culture also finds its locus on this immutable canvas through the depiction of missiles and mosques, portraits of film stars and politicians as celebrated icons of nationalism. The choice of imagery is often determined by current popular trends in taste and aesthetics. The juxtaposition of truck art with the neo-miniature movement thus presents a validation of issues of identity that have underpinned visual art practices over sixty years.

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Figure 8. Portrait of a woman wearing a niqaab (veil) painted on the back of a truck. Written is 'Lajpal Kabootri'. Karachi, 2006.

Figure 9. EXOTIC BODIES
Aisha Khalid
Gouache on vasli, 2002. Size: 23x30 cm

Figure 10. (Pages 30&31)
OF OUR LORDS AND MASTERS
Nusra Latif Qureshi
Acrylic and gouache on illustration board, 2003.
Size: 44x67 cm

Figure 11. (Page 32)
REASONABLE ACTS OF COMPLIANCE
Nusra Latif Qureshi
Gouache and acrylic on vasli, 2005.
Size: 28x21 cm

Figure 12. (Page 33) Portrait of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, 'Mir-e Balochistan, Pakistan' painted on the back of a truck along with the flag of his political party. Also written are the names of those who requested the painting, one of them being Rahimdad Khan Kajani Baloch.

Figure 13. (Page 33) Portraits of Benazir Bhutto appeared on trucks after her assassination in 2007.

Figure 14. (Page 34&35) Portrait of Ataullah Isa Khan Khelvi, a popular folk musician, surrounded by images of angels, landscapes, flowers and birds painted on the back of a truck. The painting is signed 'Yunus art' while 'Imran goods transport' is inscribed on an image of a truck within the painting. Several names of the proprietors are listed.

i. A beautiful 'pure' maiden promised to the believer in paradise.
ii. The name of the celestial winged creature brought by Archangel Gabriel for Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) *Isra* or 'the Night Journey'.

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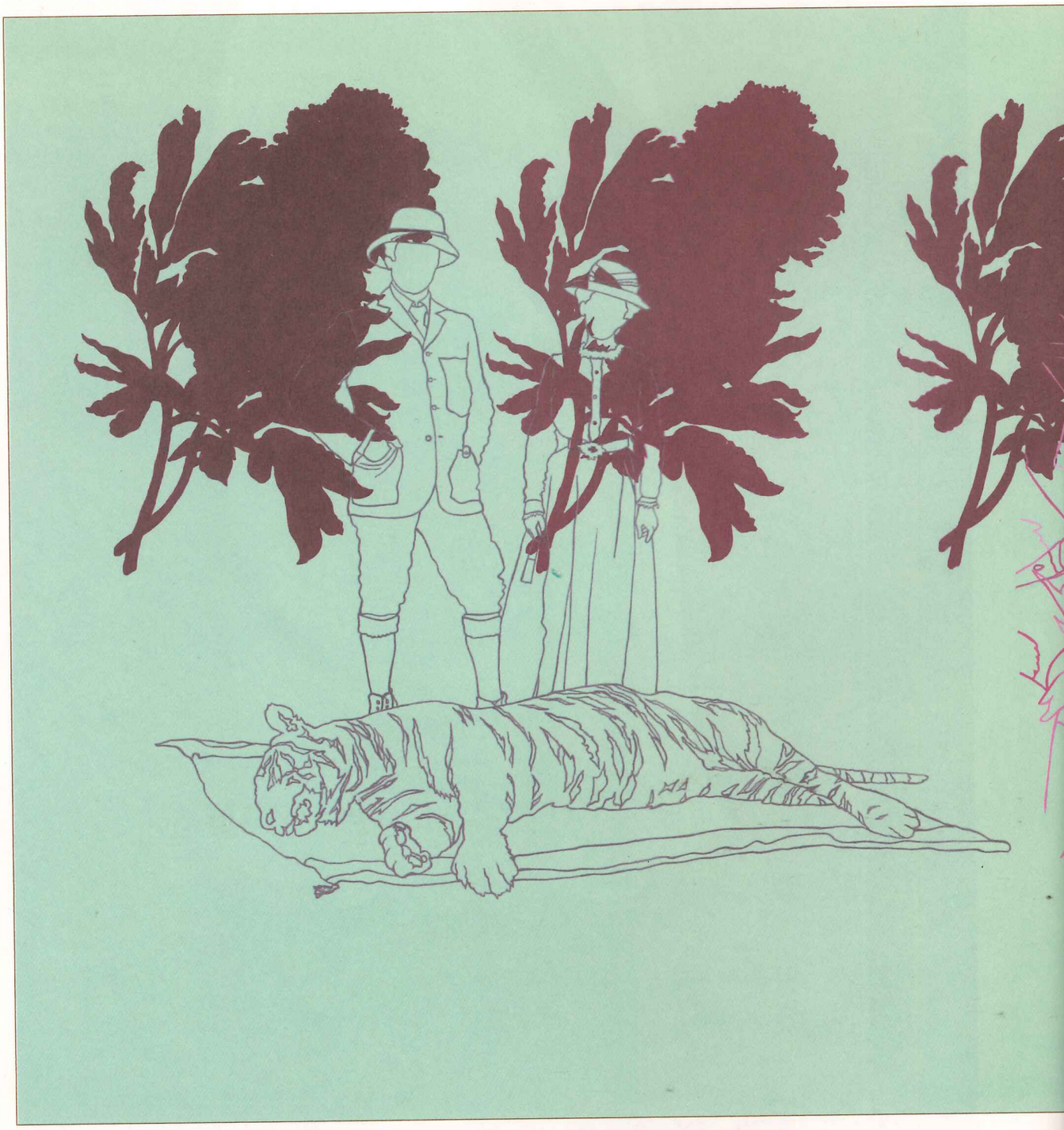
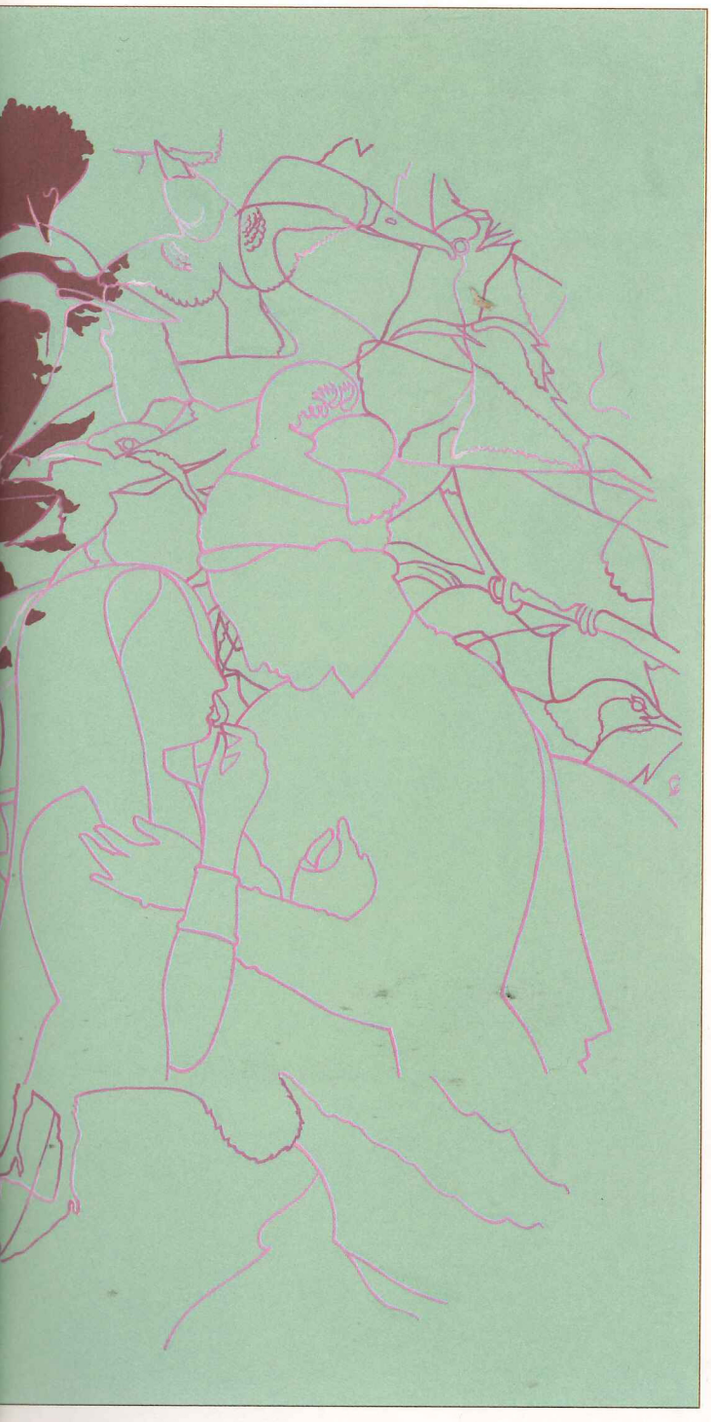
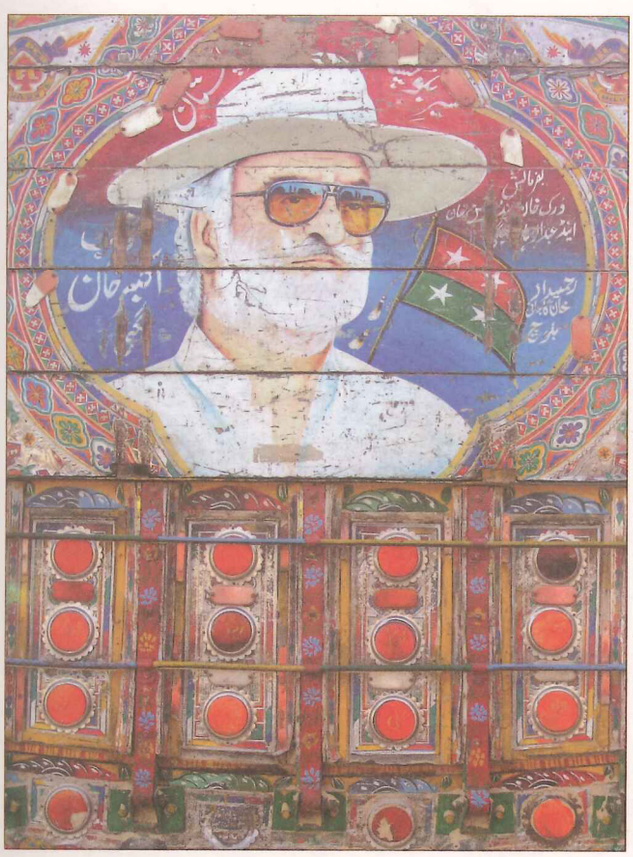
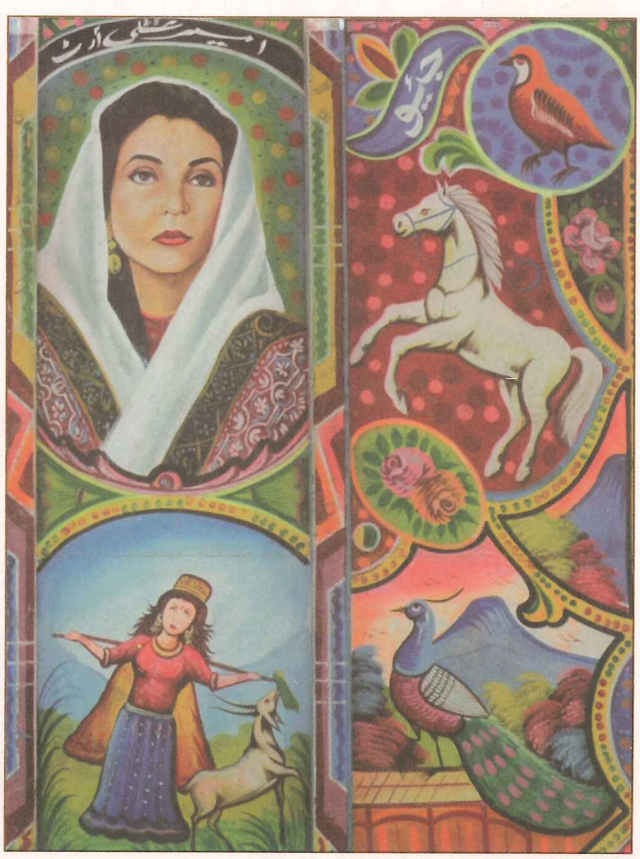




11.

M. IMRAN QURESHI & NAAZISH ATA-ULLAH





12–13.

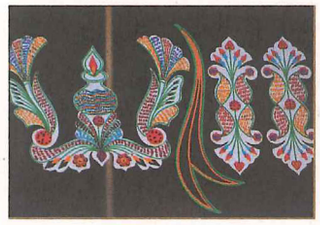
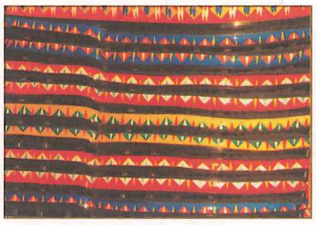
M. IMRAN QURESHI & NAAZISH ATA-ULLAH

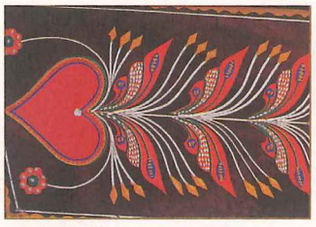
14.

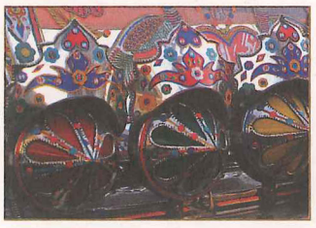
W-11

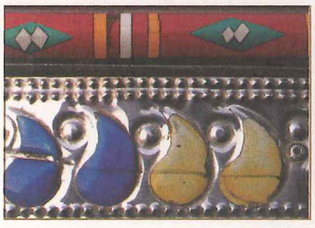
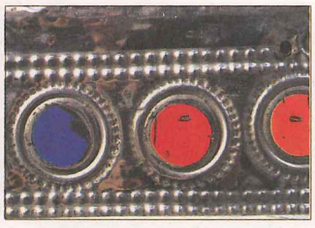
The Minibus

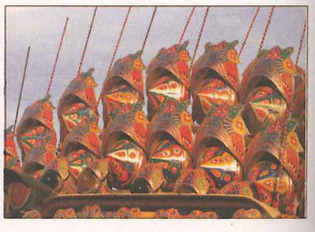
AMEAN J.

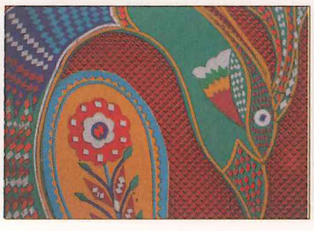



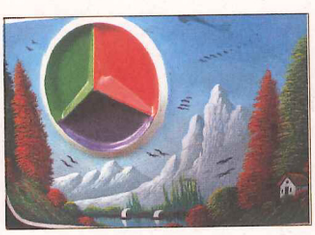










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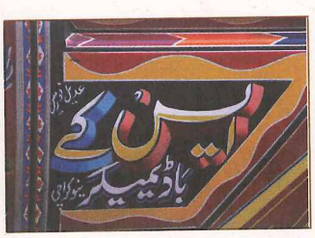


Moon

JF.0757
KARACHI

Traversing the city from the north to the south, with the latest hits blaring from its music system is perhaps the most lavishly decorated moving entity on the streets of Karachi—the W-11 minibus. A fleet of five hundred minibuses provides round-the-clock service to Karachites, leaving its two terminals every thirty seconds during peak hours, and completing each run, from one end of the city to the other, in one hour and twenty minutes.

The beautification of the W-11, taking a cue from truck art, is a relatively new development, starting sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Inspired by nature, the artwork consists of geometric patterns and motifs, which are typically floral and organic—peacocks, parrots, dolphins, fish, roses etc. Interestingly enough, these images occur in pairs, lending symmetry to the overall design, and appear both on the façade as well as the interior. Some of the minibuses sport quite random images such as the Pakistan International Airline (PIA) aircraft, Geo Television and even Playboy bunny logos. It is hard to imagine that there is any significance to them, other than the painter's or the owner's desire to associate himself with these icons. Typography also plays a significant role, as the minibus proudly displays the names of the artist, designer and the proprietor.

The adornment begins after the completion of the structure of the bus, constructed to a standard design by the 'body-maker'. After spray-painting, the *chamakpatti* and *nickel wallah* collaborate to embellish the bus. *Chamakpatti* (literally 'glitter strips') decoration is a series of cookie-cutter shapes made out of glittering reflective tape into mosaic-like patterns and images. The images are drawn on an adhesive sheet which provides a base, on which is applied coloured reflective tape cut into small shapes like *namakpara* (diamonds), *bindiya* (tear drops), hearts, circles etc. to form a mosaic. Strips of this tape in varying widths are used to frame the image. In fact, the W-11 written on the windshield, as an identifier is also creatively fashioned out of *chamakpatti*, each being unique. The nickel work consists of embossed designs on tin foil, hammered into relief from the reverse side, termed repoussé. Subsequently, the sides are embellished with favourite paintings, especially landscapes of sunsets and sunrises. Next, the bus is ready for its final adornment or *singhar*—tassels, disco lights, beads, elaborate cushions and curtains—are all used to accessorize and 'dress' the bus.

This so-called *dulhan* or bride of the Karachi streets can set the owner back anywhere from Rs 60,000 to Rs 200,000 in adornment alone. Rumour has it that one W-11 even has its own solid gold key!

Pages 36–37. Interior of a W-11 bus at the Allahwallah Terminal, New Karachi. The seats are of pink and turquoise vinyl while the colourful ceiling is patterned with artwork made with plastic appliqué.

Pages 38–39. Exterior of the minibus embellished in chamakpatti *(mosaic-like decoration constructed from reflective tape) and nickel work. The windows are decorated with peacocks, while through the side door a seated passenger is seen holding a railing.*

Pages 40–41. Detail of a painting on the side of the W-11, featuring a white horse, a landscape with a waterfall and bright patterns. Also visible is the signature of the artist, Ranjha, written in Urdu.

Pages 42–43. Details of decorative elements on different parts of a W-11 minibus.

Pages 44–45. A focus on the interior front portion of a W-11 minibus. The bars in front separate the area designated for female passengers along with the driver's seat. At night, the minibus is typically illuminated with red lights.

Page 46. W-11 is inscribed in chamakpatti *on the windshield (right). The ornamented* taj *or crown is a peculiar feature, extending from the top of the front of the minibus.*

1.

Figure 1. (Left) A photography backdrop from the 1960s with an illustration of a mansion. Under the fence is inscribed 'Azam Jat photographer, Sheikhupura' while written below the fountain is the name and address of 'Amarnath artist, Railway Road, Banga'.

Medium: Acrylic on cotton fabric.

Rooh Kheench SPIRIT PULLING
Backdrops for Photography

VISUAL CONTRIBUTION: MALCOLM HUTCHESON
ESSAY: ATTEQA ALI

Rooh Kheench literally means 'spirit pulling'. It refers to the popular myth that images, in particular photographs, capture the souls of those depicted. *Rooh Kheench* portraits were popular in Pakistan during the 1950s and 1960s, and were taken by street photographers in front of a variety of hand painted backdrops—from brightly coloured buildings in the Mughal architectural style to a contemporary urban landscape or a mansion complete with an intricate garden (*Figure 1*). With the click of the camera, the sitters were transported to Europe or to their newly acquired multi-room mansions and could experience these settings in spirit, if not in their actual lives.

In the 1950s, photography was not a new technique in the Indian subcontinent, having been brought by the British in the mid-nineteenth century, only a few months after Daguerre unveiled his camera in France and Talbot introduced his technique in England.[1] The British government employed photography to record and classify Indian 'types' and compiled this information in the eight-volume work, *The People of India*.[2] Meant to provide an insight into the ethnic groups of the subcontinent, the images were organized according to regions and professions, for example, a Hindu tradesman from Delhi was shown conducting business. Many scholars today suggest that these photographs of Indian types were meant to be a way to control and systemize the population.[3,4]

At the same time, the elite class that worked for the British, including nobility, used photography to create portraits that resembled the ones which the colonizers commissioned for themselves. However, the Indian examples included paint; this technique of adding paint to a photograph was used by Europeans, but seems to have been exploited in colonial India. In some portraits, much of the image is painted over with gouache. By inserting details such as a coloured background, jewellery, and patterns on clothing, something produced by a machine was turned into a unique object, its mechanical aspects being subverted by the hand.

The hand is also present in the *Rooh Kheench* photographs. In one *(Figure 2a)*, a man stands in front of a mansion; it is a black and white photograph, but appears to have been doctored: the man's face emerges from the monotone image, its treatment in pinks making the figure look both real and otherworldly. The background of this photograph and other such imagery also shifts between the naturalistic and the stylized. There seems to have been an effort by the artist to create an illusion of the natural world. The colours, however, seem too intense to be shades found in nature; the perspective appears skewed, the architecture, out of proportion.

This method of making imagery is something familiar in popular art in the subcontinent. It is a mixing of mathematically correct drawing with the magical. In colonial India, there was a preference for a more naturalistic style that emphasized classical ideals of representing the body, meaning that the physique was perfectly proportioned according to a system of ratios developed in ancient Greece. Yet this style was never entirely based on European concepts. Painters manipulated these foreign ideas by incorporating local influences, as witnessed in the work of Ravi Varma, who introduced the Hindu pantheon as a fleshy, earthly group of personalities. His subject matter, Hindu mythology and Indian village life, was painted in a classically Western way. In particular, Varma focused on women as allegories for the nation, and dressed them in saris, covered them with jewellery, and portrayed their bodies in a voluptuous manner. He developed *Bharatiya nari*, the ideal of Indian womanhood, by combining regional traits from all over the country that, when brought together, were to result in a composite national figure. This type of aesthetic later translated into an industry of *bazaar* art, from production of calendars to stage backdrops. By adopting this approach, painters created a specific kind of epistemological framework for a South Asian trope of representation. And this is what viewers will find in the *Rooh Kheench* backdrops.

Fantasy is a term that comes to mind. The people posing for these pictures do not appear to be affluent. They have dressed up, but there are signs indicating their lack of wealth—scuffed shoes, worn out clothing, and 'manual labour' hands *(Figure 2a)*. In posing for a photograph, the troubles of the world are left behind and dreams are fulfilled. New and wonderful locations are ready and waiting for them to enter. For example, a mansion set within a lush garden with trees growing in abundance, hedges and lawns neatly trimmed behind fences; the night sky perfectly clear with a shining crescent moon and twinkling stars *(Figure 1)*. At first glance, the painting appears true to life despite its idealized imagery. Looking closer, however, the viewer notices that the architecture is flattened as if it is a cardboard cut-out; the stairs are similarly flat.

The large building, seemingly based on Victorian concepts of grandeur, is partly neo-classical, partly Mughal in style—a staid, formal entity—situated within an extensive garden. Such works of architecture could be found in eighteenth century England, and similar undertakings, like the one depicted in the backdrop, were translated into the colonies.

In another backdrop, the painter collects in a single skyline, architecture from many times and places *(Figure 3a)*; there is an attempt to show three-

What a surprise, they were so colourful! I had not expected them to be, having seen the backdrops in small black and white Rooh Kheench *photographs from the early 1960s. I thought they would be painted in shades of grey, as the tonal relationships would then be more consistent. Painted in colour, the photographer had to risk the red appearing much darker in the black and white print than in reality—the simple photographic materials could not record the whole spectrum of light.*

The backdrop, therefore, had a function besides removing the sitter from the reality of the street: it was advertising. It was enticing, playful and attracted the customer. Sitting in front of these fabrics s/he was transported into another reality, although this was seen less by the sitter than the photographer who assumed the role of director in this small one-act play. The prints show us the end result of a personal transformation. A piece of pavement made into a stage; the audience, relatives and friends. The director lets his services, positioning limbs, tilting heads and cautioning immobility and its benefits in the resulting image. Then, after waving a lens cap in the air for a few seconds in a sort of flourish, the real alchemy could begin.

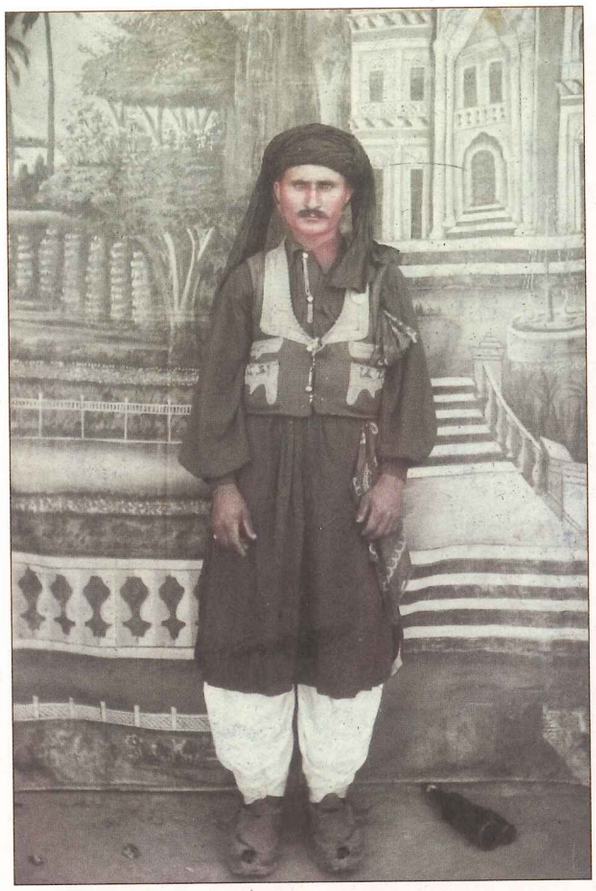
The Rooh Kheench *camera was also a darkroom on legs, and in a feat which defies even our instant digital expectations, a photograph is manifest. Perhaps not manifest as such. The box is hot inside, the chemicals irritating to the skin, it is not a comfortable birth for such poignant memories, so let us say drawn, the image is drawn from the sitter.* Rooh Kheench *literally 'spirit pulling' means as much, named after the action of pulling the spirit by hand from the back of the camera, the likeness captured on the paper in millions of microscopic particles of silver. It all took place in the time it takes to drink a cup of tea.*

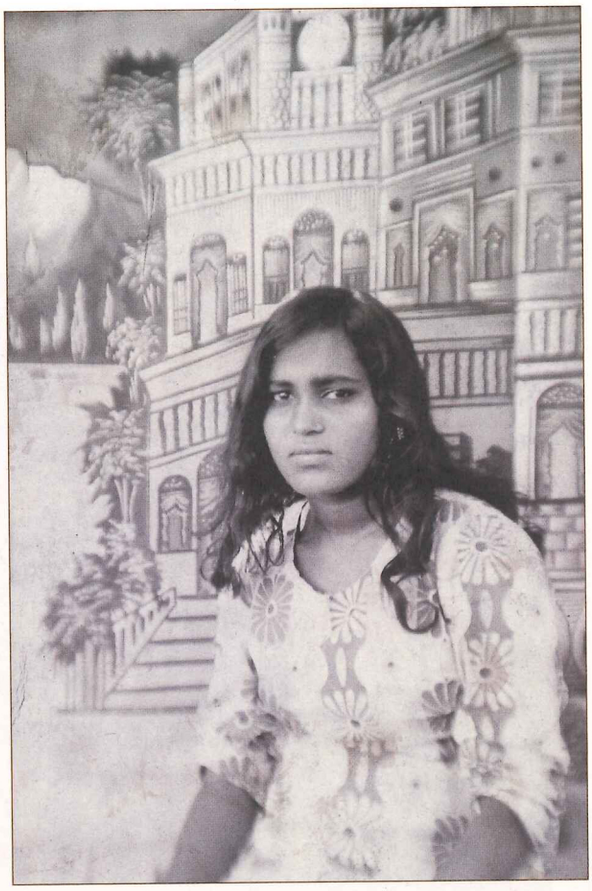
Placing these black and white prints alongside the full colour reproductions of the backdrops seems slightly cruel. It is, after all, colour that killed the Rooh Kheench *photographer's business. Slowly the trade shifted from special likenesses of a loved one requiring a fantastic backdrop to utilitarian portraits made only for driving or gun licences. These dull recordings required a plain sheet, black was preferred. In the late seventies skyscrapers came in vogue as a theme but even such radical modernization was quickly disregarded. In the eighties everyone was frequenting small studios promising lifelike colour from Konica and Kodak, and by the turn of the century, the numbers of street photographers had declined. Now no one is left. Backdrops bought before Partition have been carefully folded and put at the bottom of a trunk, placed under a bed in the photographer's home, and subsequently misplaced, or unceremoniously disposed of.*

The palaces and moonlit gardens of the imagination are seen no more. No one's imagined paradise could compete with a crisp depiction of the colour of your child's hair and that particular shade of pink in a favourite dress. Commerce tries hard to make us believe we live in a more colourful and therefore better world. Take a look at these backdrops and know that the truth is never that simple.

— MALCOLM HUTCHESON

Figures 2a–c. Rooh Kheench *photographs taken in front of different sections of the backdrop in Figure 1, captured by Baba Bhutta, Sheikhupura.*





2a–b.

2c.

3a.

3b.

dimensional forms with details like bricks and glass windows; the buildings exhibit, however, similar flatness as in the other backdrops. By formulating a hybrid style of imagery, the *Rooh Kheench* painters created a quality in which the photographs could never be accepted as true.

The portraits taken were black and white; the backdrops, however, were full of a rainbow of saturated hues. The setting sun in *Figure 3a* offers shades of pinks and orange. The city skyline in *Figure 4* depicts deep shades of yellow highlighting the towers and highrises. The backdrops and the portraits actually resist the real.[5] They do so in the style in which they are rendered—a juxtaposition of the real and the imagined.

When the sitter positioned him– or herself in front of these settings, reality was undermined at another level. The individual was asked to pose for his or her portrait. The posed photograph is, indeed, a verisimilitude. It signals a pretension, a posturing. A girl sits in front of her stately home *(Figure 2b)*; a boy with angels in the background forces his younger brother to face the camera *(Figure 2c)*; a man becomes part of a staged production *(Figure 3b)*.

The notion of the 'staged' is evident in quite a literal manner in the backdrop in *Figure 3a*. The urban landscape is placed within a stage-like setting behind curtains that one sees in a theatre. It exists beyond short walls and a low tiled wall. Or, conversely, it is the view out from the loggia of a villa. Either way, this manipulated stage is where a play is waiting to be enacted by the sitter.

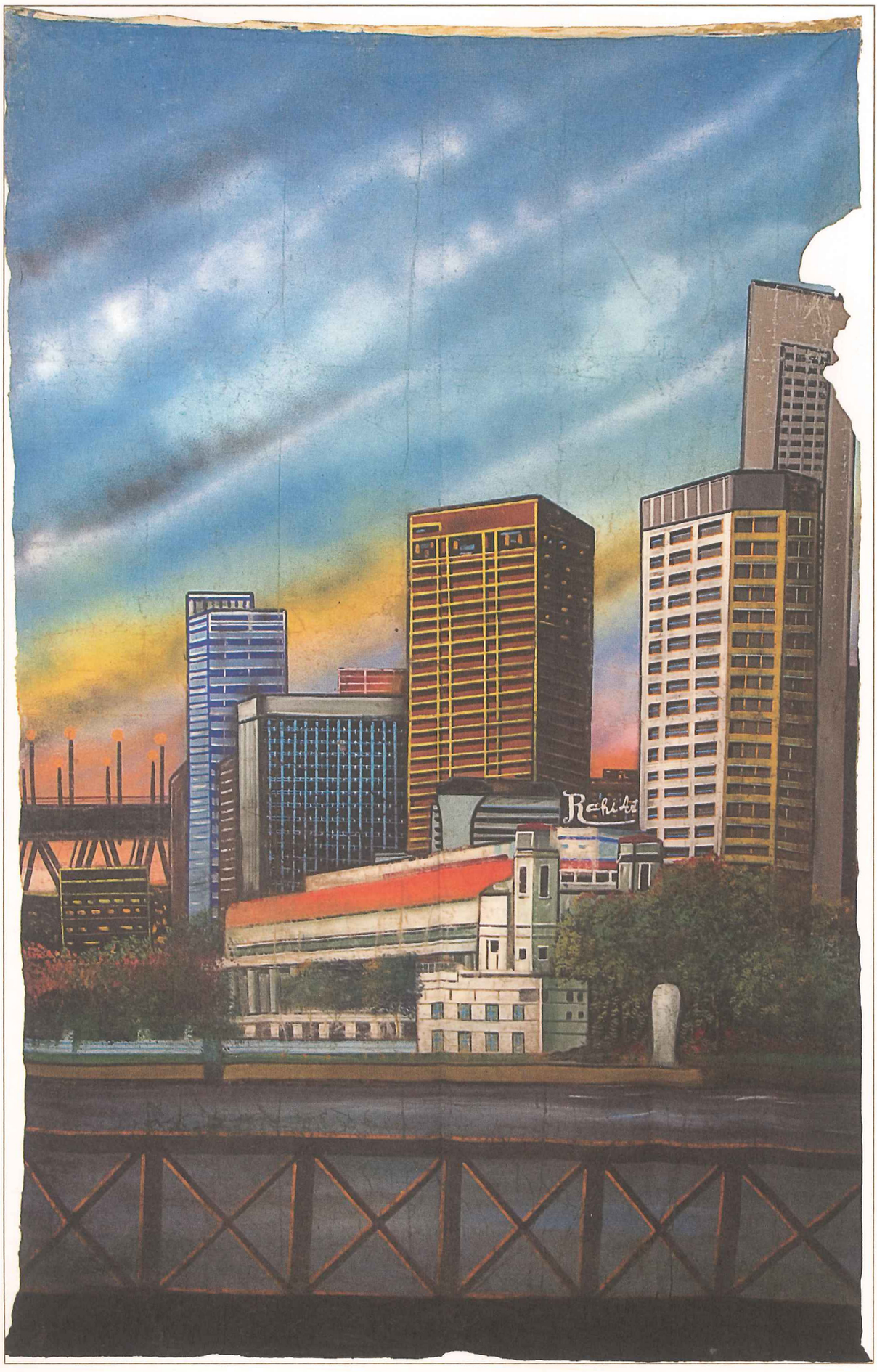
Thus, imagination continually makes its mark on these images—it is seen in the painted backdrop that shifts between the naturalistic and the fantastic; it is understood in the pose of the sitter; it is present in a black and white photograph treated with colour. It is also shown through the iconography of the depicted locations. The painted backdrops are 'necessarily fragmentary'—the term assigned by the cultural theorist Arjun Appadurai to photographic backdrops used in colonial India.[6]

His argument is, however, just as easily applied to the later *Rooh Kheench* photographs in which the location is often a stylised urban landscape. As such, they serve as metaphors, not for a specific place, but for 'a type of location'.[7] It is a metonymical practice in which a part stands in for the whole. Perhaps it is modernity, or the aspiration to be modern, that is being metaphorized in

Figure 3a. This backdrop presents several buildings framed by a 'curtain' and a tiled low wall in the foreground. Signed on the lower left hand is 'Manchar Singh Amarnath painter, Railway Road, Jallandhar', while on the right is 'Chaudhry Azam, photographer, Sheikhupura'.

Figure 3b. The photograph portrays a client positioned in front of the backdrop, c.1960.

4.



MALCOLM HUTCHESON & ATTEQA ALI

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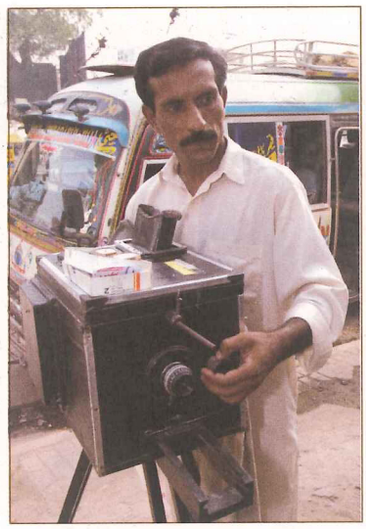

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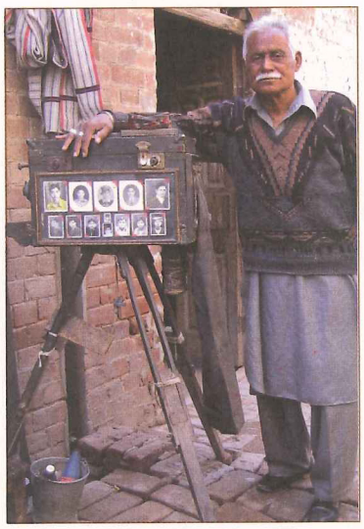

Figure 4. A cityscape from the 1970s shows high-rise buildings with modern glass towers, representing a notion of European cities.

Figure 5. Photographer Naveed Amin with his Rooh Kheench *camera, 2002.*

Figure 6. Baba Bhutta, Sheikhupura, 2001.

the *Rooh Kheench* portraits—modernity here being associated with Europe and European ideals. In the act of interpretation, the modern becomes localized. In this back and forth between Western and Eastern, between the real and not so real, the backdrops become sites for 'experiments with modernity'.[8]

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6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

1.

HASAN ZAIDI

Aina MIRROR
Publicity Design as a Reflection of Lollywood Film Content

HASAN ZAIDI

Buxom belles in scarlet and gold, *gandasa*[i]-clutching heroes in beige and black, blood- or sweat-drenched villains in diabolical green and purple: nothing captures the essence of commercial film in the subcontinent better than its medium of publicity *(Figures 1–12)*. Literally larger than life, cinema hall hoardings depict as much action and emotion on canvas as film-makers squeeze on to three hours of celluloid. As a result, they inevitably evoke the visual chaos we have come to associate with Lollywood,[ii] the Pakistani film industry.

Hoardings and posters are the first point of contact between the film and its target audience. The "reel 'em in" splash of colours, depicting dramatic scenes of sex and violence is calculated to have the masses lining up outside ticketing booths. Before television promotions and mass marketing made film publicity itself an art, these melodramatic hoardings were solely responsible for enticing audiences into darkened theatres screening black and white films. Even now, no cinema district would be worth its salt if it did not offer an array of exaggerated, multihued interpretations of silver screen fantasy.

Much like film posters on the back of *tongas*[iii] and motorised rickshaws—which preceded mobile advertising in the West—cinema hoardings came to be identified as a uniquely subcontinental medium of film promotion, even though the films being promoted were often Hollywood musicals adapted to suit the indigenous taste for *nautanki*.[iv] Echoing the diversity of the region, the singular film poster—a staple of film publicity worldwide—was translated into two- or three- storey-high works of art for the street. As such, cinema hoardings or street art in the real sense of the phrase became popular. Inviting, arousing, brash, and disposable, the hoardings survived only as long as the films they represented screened inside the cinema.

Figure 1. (Left) Inspector—Film poster
Designed by Galib
Lithography, printed by Nawa-i-Waqt, Lahore, 1964. (Reduced from 75.5x100.5 cm)

Aina meaning mirror, the title of an epic film from the 1970s.

i. *Gandasa*: A wooden baton.

ii. The Pakistani cinema industry primarily based in Lahore is popularly termed Lollywood, referring to Bombay's Bollywood derived from the Hollywood Studios.

iii. *Tongas*: horse-drawn carriages.

iv. *Nautanki*: folk theatre.

Then it was back to the paint-speckled alleys for the vast sheets of tin for painting over in time for the next big attraction.

The process of constructing cinema hoardings is fascinating *(Figures 13–33)* and, until recently, was considered an integral part of a film's marketing strategy. Painters were sought out for their draughtsman's skill, innovation, sense of design and style. Legend has it that M.F. Husain, the iconic Indian artist, began his career painting movie hoardings for a few *annas* (pennies) a square foot. Blessed with a flamboyant talent, some artists specialised in genres or mastered the features of particular film stars. Frequently, the selection of scenes to be depicted was also left to the master painter, who would be assisted by a team of apprentices. Each scene depicted on a billboard (selected on the basis of dramatic potential or the appeal of the actors involved) would have its still photograph divided on to grids. Divisions would be proportionally enlarged and transferred onto waiting tin sheets nailed together on wooden frames. Perched dangerously on flimsy on-site scaffolding, the team of artists would then ply their trade: one would draw outlines, another fill in details, a third add colour *(see interviews, page 66)*.

But in a globalising world, billboard painting is a dying art. Labour-intensive and costly, hand painted billboards are increasingly being replaced by photographic digital printouts *(Figure 5, above)*. Quicker to mass produce, the new computerised printouts are more hip, more meticulous, more glossy—in other words, more multiplex. The trend is still in its infancy in Pakistan as multiplexes are a relatively new phenomenon. However, the prevalent use of panaflex—a laser-printed fabric featuring design-software generated images—on roadside advertising billboards, in large urban centres is an indication of what's to come.

But is the demise of painted billboards simply connected to the rise of new technology and the global economic takeover? Or is this an indicator of changing tastes and the inability of regional film industries to keep pace with a changing environment? In light of evolving trends, it would be instructive to explore whether the identification in popular perception of certain cinema publicity with a particular aesthetic of film-making is in fact mirrored in the content of the films.

The difference between publicity for new Hollywood blockbusters—ostensibly far removed from the world of Pakistani cinema—and the local product is certainly stark. Studio films imported into Pakistan now come equipped with stringent publicity guidelines, including those of multinational companies; the films' publicity decisions are taken far away and merely adapted to a local environment, usually involving nothing more than translating the script from English to Urdu. For the most part, the designs feature a singular, stylised image that is accompanied by word play in the shape of a tag line. This propensity for notation contrasts with the local preference for a plethora of images sans text.

In the past, however, the hoarding publicity of imported films was locally designed, often with great fanfare. The largest hoarding ever designed was a one-piece for the epic *Cleopatra* starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The billboard covered the entire length of the Bambino and Scala

Figure 2. (Right) Illustrating the popular themes of action, violence and revenge, this portrait from a cinema hoarding is calculated to put the fear of the quintessential villain, Sultan Rahi, into the hearts of the viewers. Executed in oil paints this image is the creation of Faiz Rahi.

2.

Aina: MIRROR

cinemas in Karachi and its raising was an event in itself. Similarly, an innovative cut-out comprising a moving arm holding a gun was installed at the Palace cinema to publicise the James Bond flick *Dr No*. Interestingly, the same master painter designed the billboards for the Indian film *Baradari*, the Pakistani venture *Gul Bakaoli* as well as the Hollywood sex-education import *Bob and Sally*.

If it is true that publicity design reflects film content in the Pakistani context, there should have been a significant change in publicity design around twenty-five years ago. At that time, Pakistani films underwent a thematic transformation while viewership waned. Regional cinema in Punjabi and Pushto shifted the focus from urbane relationship dramas to action flicks set in the rural heartland—violence, blood and gore became standard Lollywood fare. These changes were probably a direct outcome of the social fragmentation of the state post-1971, the political assertion of the previously sidelined rural and working classes under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, as well as the increasing militarisation of society under the military dictatorship of General Ziaul Haq. Moreover, television had been established as an alternative visual medium.

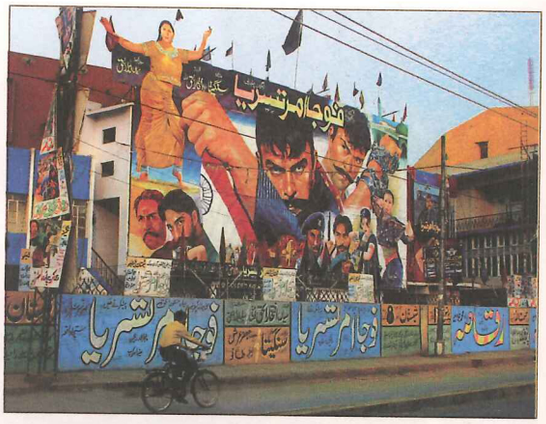
Unfortunately, there is not enough documentation regarding the cinema hoardings of the early 1970s to ascertain whether they too changed like the country and its cinema. Like most street art, billboards were temporary and were painted over once their immediate usefulness was expended. But another medium of film publicity, the commercially available poster, has survived through various private collections and can be used to map changes in design.

Remarkably, the design of the film poster echoes the change in the kind of films being produced in Pakistan. One has only to compare older film posters with contemporary ones to detect a different aesthetic. Older posters are minimalist, focusing primarily on the main characters—usually a couple, at times a singular figure—and displaying a powerful graphic design sense. In these renditions, the storyline is king and selected poses serve only to convey the essence of the plot.

Consider, for example, the starkness of Hassan Tariq's *Pyasa (Thirsty*, 1973), in which the drunken depravity of Shahid contrasts with the wholesome goodness of the village belle, Rani *(Figure 6)*. The simplicity of Khalid Khurshid's *Nazneen* (1969, *Figure 7)* is reflected in its poster that emphasises the love story starring Nadeem and Shabnam. Similarly, the poster for S.M. Yusuf's convoluted and whimsical 1966 blockbuster *Saheli (Female Friend)* introduces the three women characters, played by Shamim Ara, Nayyar Sultana and Bahar, in the festive colours of a subcontinental wedding—the imagery seems rather tame and does not hint at the dark secrets that drive the tear jerker *(Figure 8)*.

In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the posters become fragmented and chaotic, and aim to sell the glamour of the featured stars, or to highlight flashy cinematic elements such as sex and violence. Often, the images seem to be thrown together, as if at random, with faces and bodies superimposed on as many scenic collages as possible. The photomontages in the poster for *Manila Key Jasoos (Spies of Manila)* exemplify this changing

3.



4.

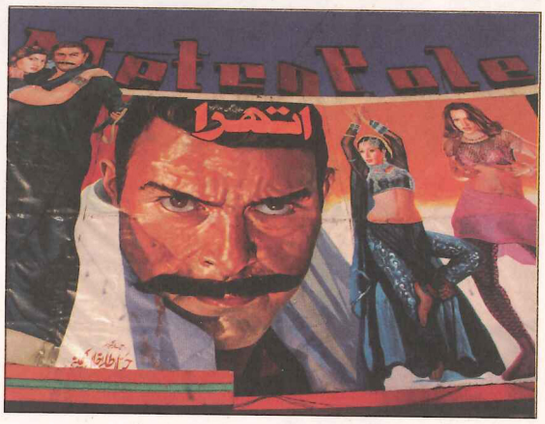


Figure 3. The hoarding for the Punjabi film 'Fauja Amritsaria' occupies the entire façade of the three-storey cinema house, Gulistan, at Lakshmi Chowk, Lahore. The hero Shan is prominent in his central placement surrounded by the rest of the cast, while the silhouette of the heroine extends beyond the building. The film title is repeated several times on the boundary wall, thus utilizing all available space. Note the posters of other movies suspended from the electricity poles!

Figure 4. Cinema hoarding for the film 'Ithra', Metropole Cinema. Lakshmi Chowk, Lahore, 2006.

Figure 5. Two film hoardings depict the contrast evident in the monochromatic laser-printed graphics (above) which are steadily replacing the vibrant hand painted ones (below). Lakshmi Chowk, Lahore, 2006.

5.

ZED NOOR
AIMA
OF PARAGON ENTERTAINMENT GROUP & SAIMA PRODUCTION
STORY : RUKHSANA NO
باؤ محمد فضل بٹ
ادھورا سنگیت
جبار طلحہ خالد کمپنی

trend as they parade an explosion of clutter, featuring all the characters who appear in the film *(Figure 11)*. Those who have endured the incoherence of most contemporary Pakistani films can attest to how this visual hysteria is a truthful reflection of the films' content.

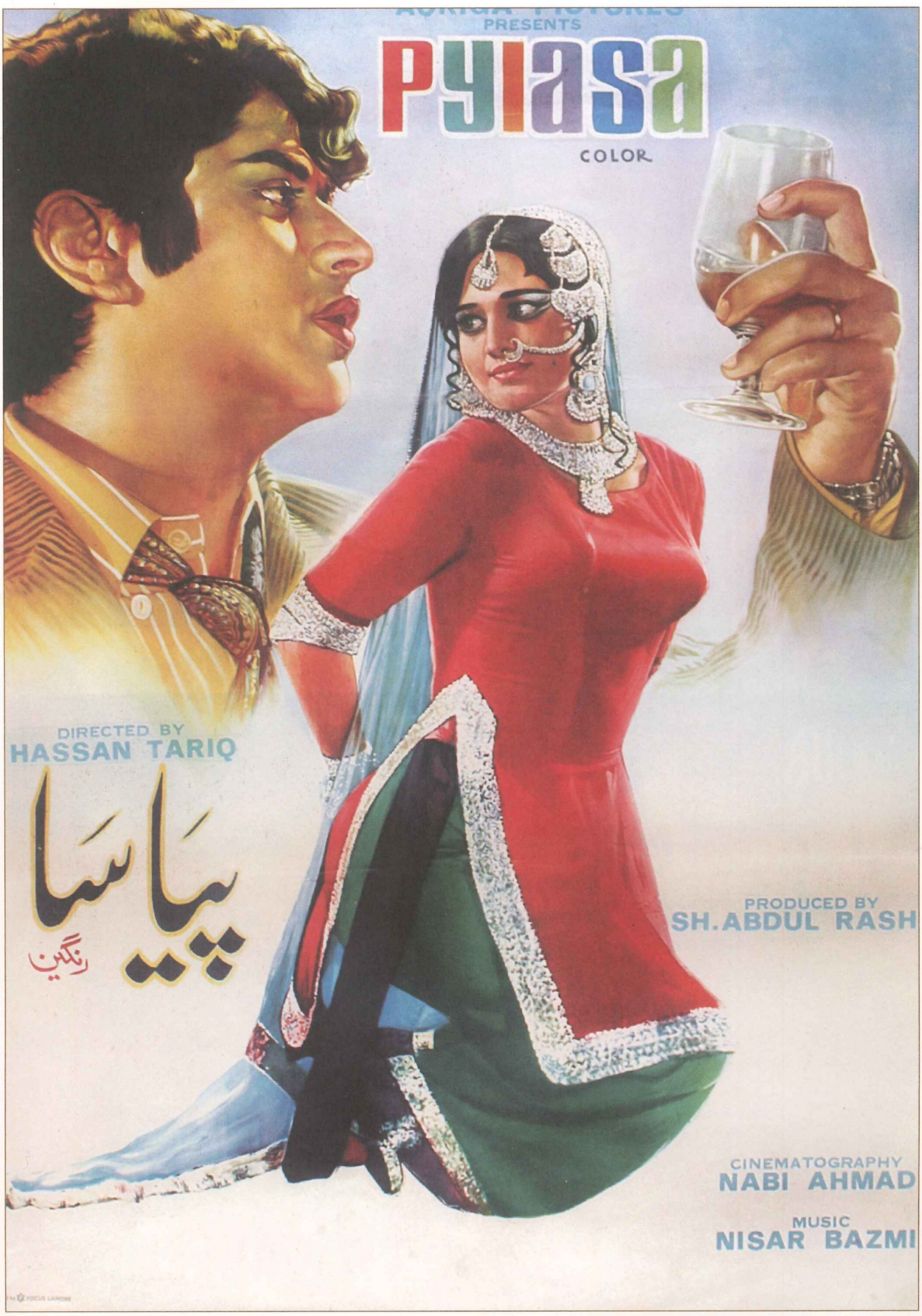
The preference for visual chaos perhaps also indicates the advent of a culture in which technology—ungoverned by ideology or theory—has become an end in itself. Designers now create a Photoshop-generated riot of colour and imagery simply because, with the software at their disposal, they can. As such, the sobriety observed in the poster for the recent film, *Bulandi (Zenith)* is an exception to the rule *(Figure 12)*.

Unfortunately, over time, the saturated colours and excessively stylised depictions favoured by billboard artists have come to be identified as kitsch that mirrors the content of local films, which fewer and fewer people want to see.

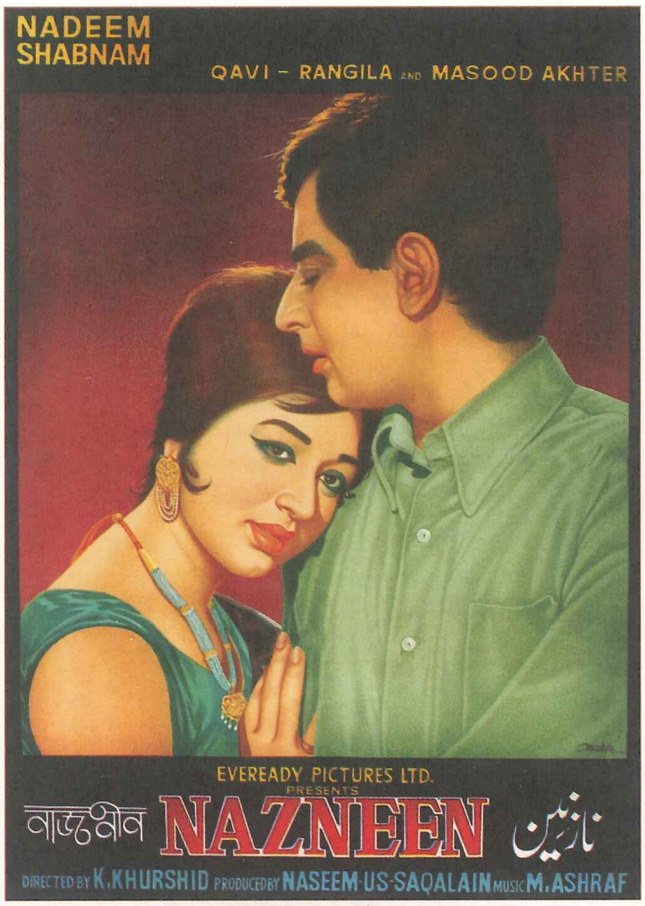
Film publicity in the shape of posters, billboards and advertisements, much like Lollywood itself, is now held hostage by the thoughtless formula that substitutes a compelling story with sexual titillation, violence, guns, multiple stars and over-the-top melodrama. In other words, cinema billboards have remained the same, but audiences, exposed to slick, western productions and pirated copies of Indian films, have changed. As viewers demand different fare from the local film industry, the old billboard aesthetic only highlights the fact that Pakistani films are outdated and old fashioned. We now want our images to look real and contemporary, even in the course of escapist fantasy. As a result, film publicity, despite its indigenous character, will probably suffer the same fate as that of the film industry in Pakistan.

Figure 6. (Right) Pyasa (Thirsty)—Film poster
Designed by S. Khan
Lithography, printed by Focus, Lahore, 1973.
(Reduced from 75.5x100.5 cm)

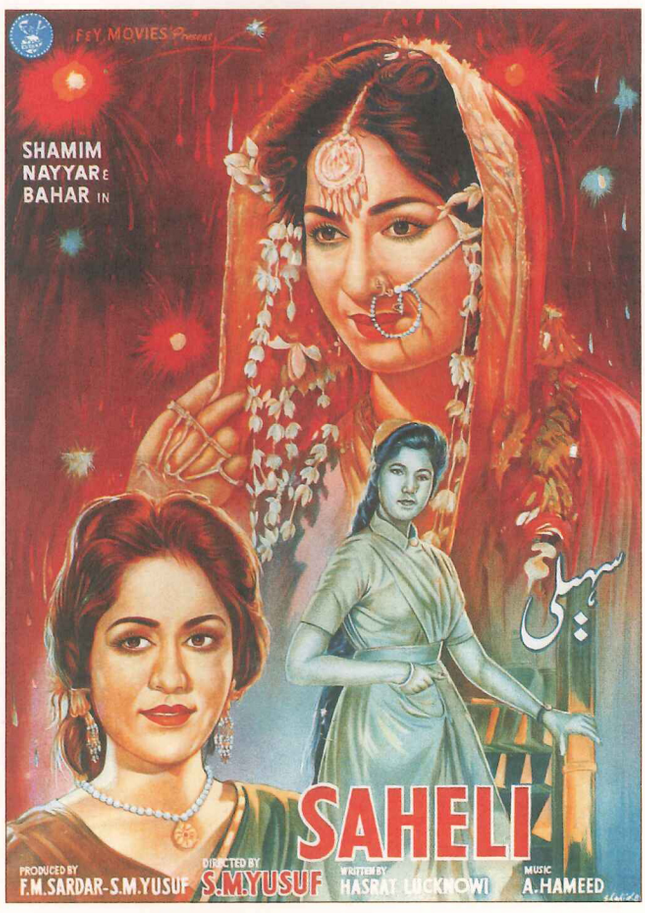
6.


PRESENTS
PYIASA
COLOR
DIRECTED BY
HASSAN TARIQ
پیاسا
رنگین
PRODUCED BY
SH. ABDUL RASH
CINEMATOGRAPHY
NABI AHMAD
MUSIC
NISAR BAZMI

7.



8.



Figures 7–12. Film posters

Figure 7. Nazneen
Designed by Shahid
Lithography, printed by New Mughal Process, Karachi, 1984.

Figure 8. Saheli (Female Friend)
Designed by Shahid
Lithography by M. Anwar Ghaori
Pakistan Printing Works, Lahore, 1966.

Figure 9. Kabeela (Tribe)
Designed by S. Khan
Lithography, Pakistan Printing Works, Lahore, 1975.

Figure 10. Nache Nagin Baje Been (Dance of the Serpent, Music of the Flute)
Designed by S. Khan
Lithography by M. Anwar Ghaori, 1965.

Figure 11. Manila Key Jasoos (Spies of Manila)
Designed by S. Khan
Photography, computer generated
Maan Printers, Lahore, 2000.

Figure 12. Bulandi (Zenith)
Designed by S. Khan
Lithography and photography
Maan Printers, Lahore, 1990.

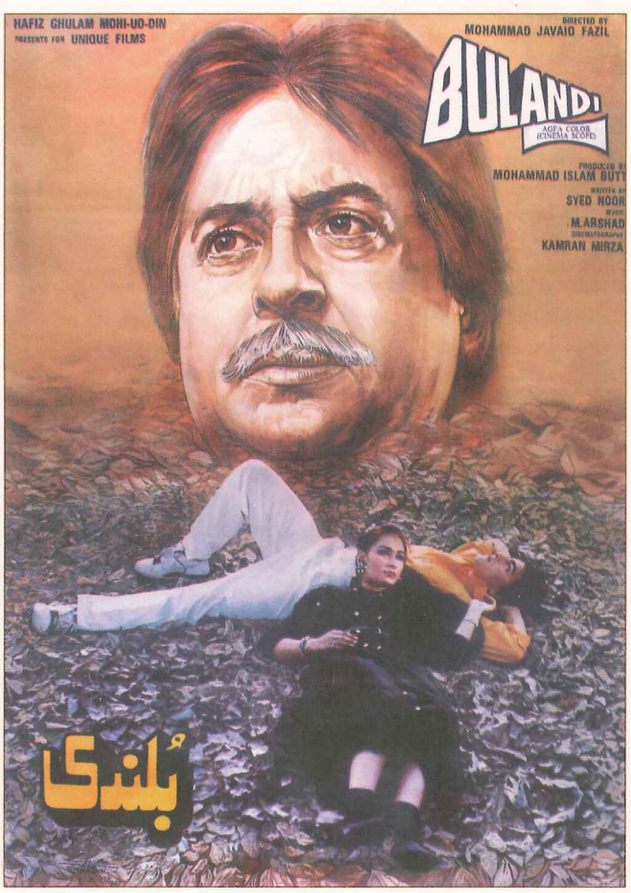
(All posters reduced from 75.5x100.5 cm)

KAMRAN PRESENTS
SUDHIR
SHAMIMARA
SALONI
NAZAR &
TALISH
قبیلہ
কাবিলা
RIAZI FILM'S
KABEEA
PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY
RIAZ AHMED
WRITTEN BY
ARSH LUCKNOVI
MUSIC
VERMA
PHOTOGRAPHY
BAHADUR SHAH

ZAFAR SHABAB PRESENTS
SHABAB PRODUCTIONS
NACHE
NAGIN
BAJE
BEEN
WRITTEN & PRODUCED BY
SHABAB KAIRANVI
DIRECTED BY
HAIDER CHOUDHRY
MUSIC
TALIB
ناچے ناگن باجے بین
GENERAL PRINTING AGENCY 66 MELEOD ROAD LAHORE

9–10.

MANILA KEY
JASOOS
DIRECTED BY:
IQBAL KASHMERI
PRODUCED BY:
SH. MOHAMMED AKRAM
منیلا کے جاسوس


HAFIZ GHULAM MOHI-UD-DIN
PRESENTS FOR UNIQUE FILMS
DIRECTED BY
MOHAMMAD JAVAID FAZIL
BULANDI
AGFA COLOR
(CINEMA SCOPE)
PRODUCED BY
MOHAMMAD ISLAM BUTT
WRITTEN BY
SYED NOOR
MUSIC
M.ARSHAD
CINEMATOGRAPHY
KAMRAN MIRZA
بلندی

11–12.

STAR ATTRACTION

Interviews with Faiz Rahi, cinema hoarding artist, Karachi and R.M. Naeem, Assistant Professor, Department of Fine Arts, National College of Arts, Lahore.

Ustad Faiz Rahi (the surname is an acknowledgement of his resemblance to Sultan Rahi, the famous hero of yesteryears, whom he impersonated in films) started painting film hoardings for cinemas, in Karachi, in 1979. After his matriculation he undertook an apprenticeship for two years with Ustad Muhammad Ashiq *aka* Heera at the Rio cinema.

He feels that the 1980s were a golden period for the art when an artist could be working on three film hoardings simultaneously. The 1990s experienced a decline in movie production while the first decade of this century has been the worst yet. Despite this, the largest set he ever painted was for the film *Jungle Queen*, in 2001, for Bambino cinema. It was 90x40 feet in size and had a cut-out of the heroine extending an additional height of 10 feet. Another memorable hoarding was that of the 1995 film *Munda Bigra Jaye (Boy getting Spoilt)* which remained mounted for over nine months.

Rahi opined that a deterioration in the quality of films, as well as the competition posed by multimedia, cable networks etc. was responsible for this decline in movie-going culture. There has been an accompanying deterioration in the quality of hoardings—one reason for this being the reduction in the time allotted to complete a piece, only three to four days. In better times the artist would be contacted by the distributor a month or at least a fortnight before the movie was to be shown. However, more damaging has been the change in attitude: 'No one really loves what they do anymore. It is all "time pass". *Khulloos wallah kaam nahin hai* (the artwork lacks sincerity).'

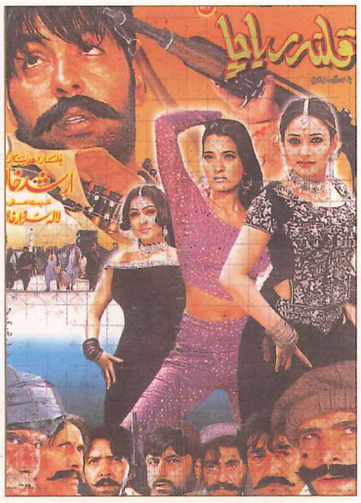
At the moment, dance and weapons are the favoured subjects for film hoardings; the gun-toting hero is projected as brave and courageous while the heroine is usually relegated to the role of the temptress and to further enhance this persona, the artist may suggestively cross-hatch parts of the heroine's figure; baiting the viewer on the street, promising more in the film than that which has been revealed on the hoarding!

Rahi's nostalgia was echoed by R.M. Naeem who reminisced that the unveiling of the cinema hoarding a few decades ago was an event in itself—the culmination of months of intense work in the making of the film—and was celebrated by a ritual distribution of sweetmeats. When a movie, starring Waheed Murad, the 'Chocolate Hero' of the 1970s was released in Lahore, the preliminary advertising was done by attaching hoardings of the star to a *tonga*, with the film songs and commentary amplified by a microphone, accompanied by the *dhol wallah*, the percussionist.

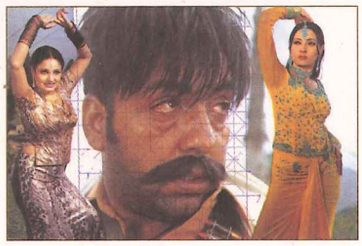
Naeem further informed that the art of painting hoardings was passed down from generation to generation, much like the *gharana*[i] tradition of the musicians of the subcontinent. The film hoardings were initially oil painted on canvas; in the 70s, the painter Kutt Pal, from the famous Lakshmi Chowk in Lahore (the main film district of Pakistan) introduced sheets of tin and used enamel paint for weatherproofing. This led to further experimentation with new materials like fluorescent paints, reflector tape, even imaginative lighting: bulbs placed in the eyes of the villain to draw the attention of the passersby! The latest innovation being the computer-generated panaflex film hoardings. Meanwhile, Rahi is of the view that technology has to be embraced and hoarding painters should collaborate with the computer designers.

To encourage the artists, Rahi also feels that cinema hoarding art deserves a special award from the film industry. The value of their work was spotlighted only recently in India when the hoarding starring a popular actor was stolen thrice! Interestingly, these hoardings are never signed by the artist or his team.

i. *Ghar*: house, referring to lineage/apprenticeship, subscribing to a particular ideology.



13.



14.

Figures 13–32. The process of painting a cinema hoarding for Pushto film 'Qalandar Bacha' by Faiz Rahi.

The Ustad (Master or teacher) chooses the elements which would be the most appropriate for the hoarding from the poster of the film (Figure 13) or a collage of images from photosets i.e. photograph stills from the film displayed in the cinema lobby as a teaser (Figure 14). This is mostly determined by the cast, the popularity of the actors and actresses.

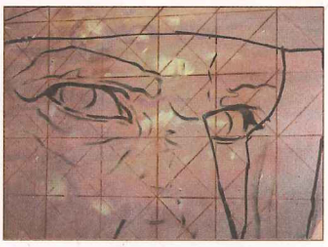
The hoarding is painted on a canvas (normally 20x10 feet) stretched on a wooden frame or on a tin sheet (Figure 15). This is recycled and painted over several times for advertising successive films. A base of white enamel paint is applied with a four-inch wide nylon brush to cover the previous painting (Figures 16–18).

Then a grid (colloquially called 'graph') is constructed with powder pigment to enable proportionate enlargement from the source image—the poster and/or photsets. The canvas is divided into squares of one foot and a smaller cross grid of six inch squares is created in the sections where the facial features will be painted. (Figures 19–20). The Ustad then draws the entire composition with a brush. Subsequently the apprentices apply the first colour palette in varnish & oil paint referred to as a 'rough' or 'single' (Figures 21–22).

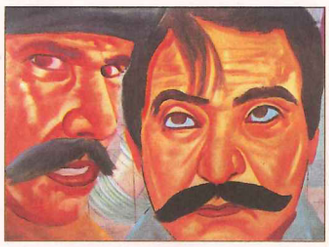
The Ustad is also responsible for giving highlights and details to the artwork with neon paints and press inks, which is called 'finish' (Figures 23–30 showing various portions of the hoarding). Then, the apprentice fills in the background (Figure 31). Finally, the separate canvases are joined together to complete the hoarding and placed on the façade of the cinema (Figure 32).

15–17.

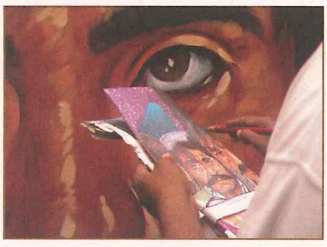
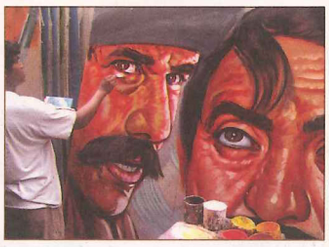
18–20.



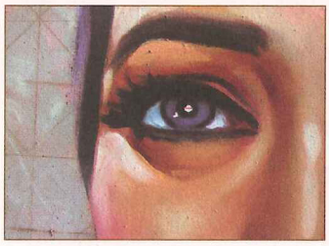
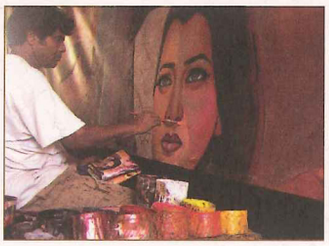
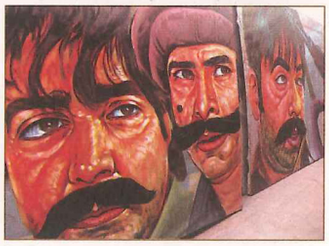
21–23.



24–26.

27–29.

30–32.

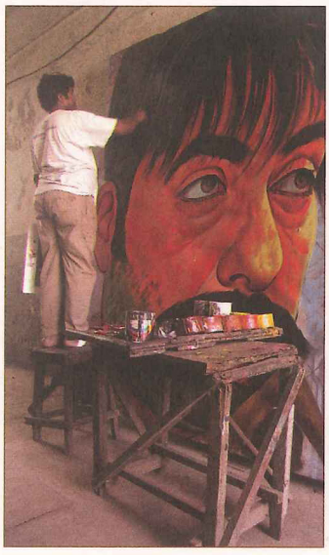
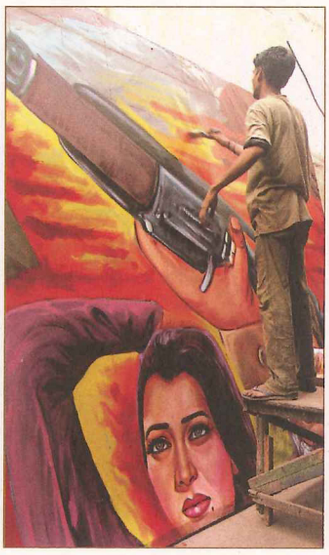
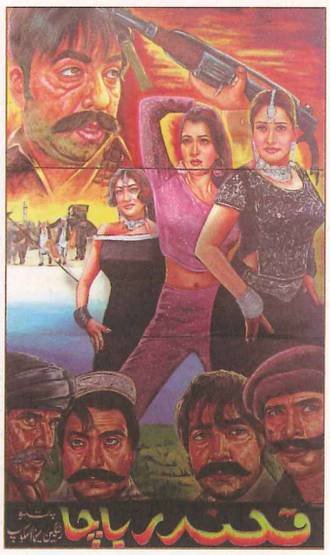




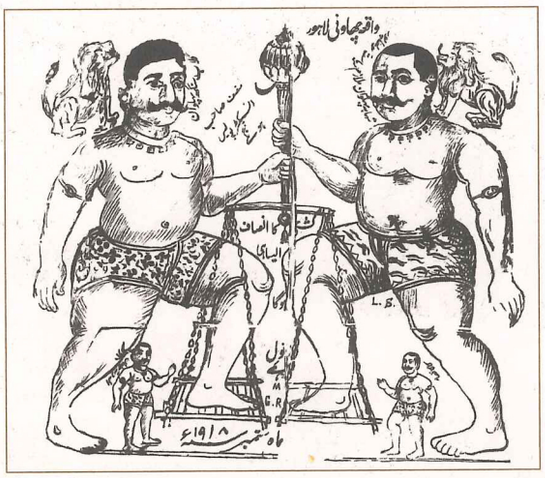
Figure 33. MAKING OF AN ICON
Rashid Rana
Oil on canvas.

The oil painting shows the process of hoardings being painted—the painters painted. On the left, a small figure is shown standing on a stool suspended in air painting the face of Sultan Rahi. On the right, another is seen (partially hidden behind Rahi) like a shadow in blue. These underscore the silent role of the hoarding painters in creating images of 'superstars'.

ANNA NICOLE SMITH
SKYSCRAPER
سکائی سکریپر
8AM-9AM
EXCEPT
SUNDAY
OUR PARKING
AM- 7PM
NCLUDING SUNDAY
5¢ PER 1/2 HR

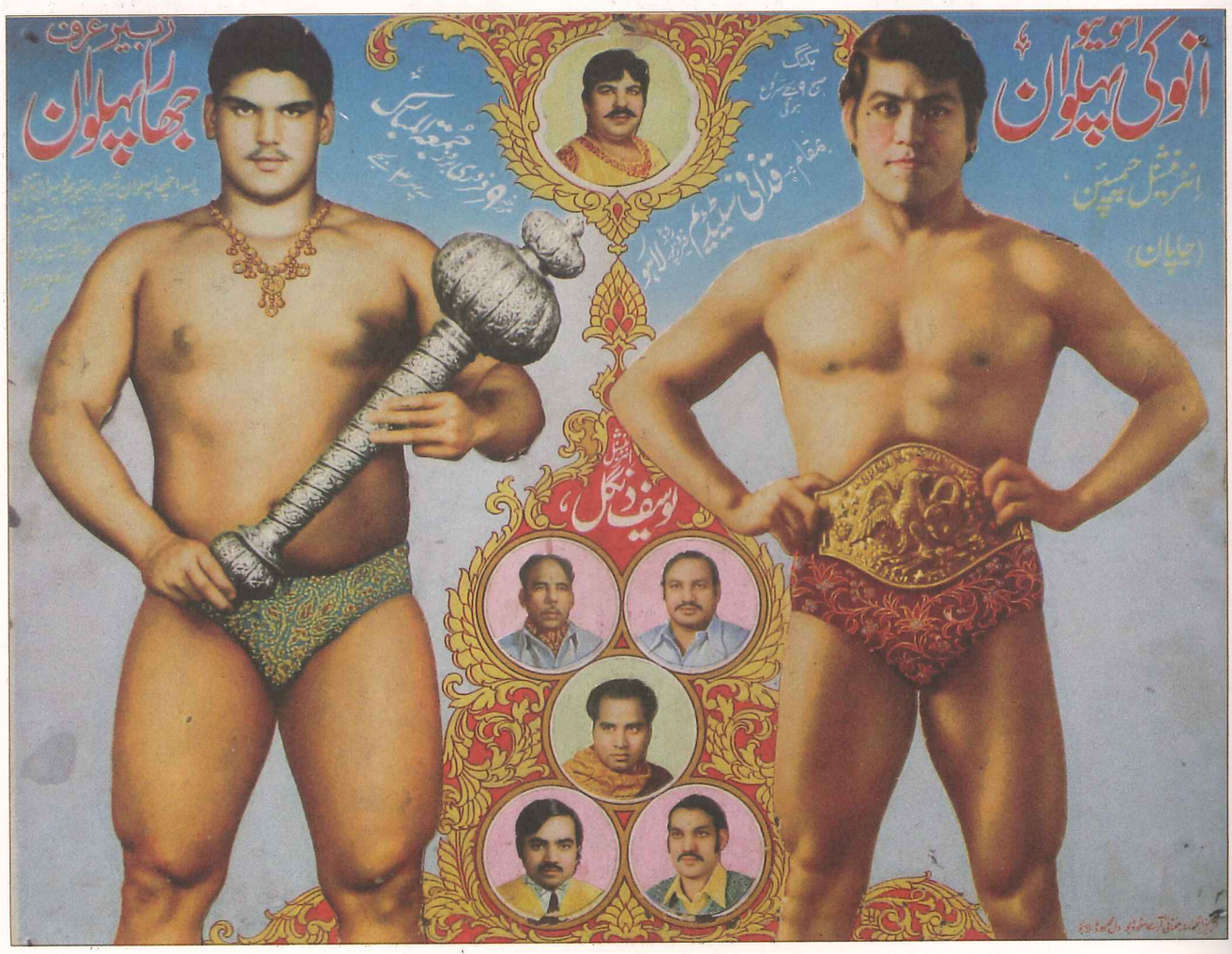
33.

1–2.


واقعہ چھاونی لاہور
ماہ ستمبر ۱۹۱۸ء

شاہی دنگل
ٹونی لیارو
بجلی کا کرنٹ
شرح ٹکٹ
خانصاحب عبدالقادر خان سیالکوٹی

3.


انوکی پہلوان
انٹرنیشنل چیمپئن
(جاپان)
جھاپہلوان
یوسف دنگل

THE MACE AND THE SCEPTRE
Iconography in Pehelwan (Wrestler) Posters

AASIM AKHTAR

Wrestling (*kushti* or *pehelwani*) is a popular sport with a rich cultural tradition. It represents an elaborate way of life with physical strength being but one manifestation of a larger disciplinary matrix entailing moral, spiritual, social, and physical regimentation. Wrestlers view themselves as extraordinary men, and are concerned with a dramatic presentation of self. The posters depicting them are ripe with symbolic significance of status, honour, propriety, hierarchy and masculinity.

Posters advertising the *dangal* (wrestling tournament) are printed in Lahore at Nawan Bazaar, outside the Lohari Gate. The main cobblestone street which runs through the market is lined with vendors selling thick-slatted parrot cages, agate rings and amulets. Heading towards Mochi Gate, one turns left off the main street which leads into a small printing press churning out *pehelwan* (wrestler) posters.

One of the earliest posters dating to c. 1918 CE, *(Figure 1)* announces a *kushti* between Gulab Singh and Shahab Pehelwan. Rendered mostly in freehand sketches on newsprint, the corpulent wrestlers with feet resting on a scale, open up the possibilities of becoming the voice of the marginalised.

A majority of the spectators at the wrestling bouts are working-class men and boys—rickshaw pullers, day labourers, semi-skilled factory workers, railway porters, and vegetable hawkers. Also avid fans are mechanics, truck drivers, and other skilled professionals who have a self-image of physical prowess. A fair percentage, however, are clerks working in the vast municipal bureaucracies, public offices, and district courts and even men owning small businesses. There is a definite quality of majestic pomp as the members of each clique affect an attitude of cocksure pride and self-confidence. The *dangal* brings out the prince in everyone.

Yet, the *dangals* themselves are the essence of a minimalist philosophy: all that is needed is an open space, a referee, a drummer, and a crowd. Unlike cricketers or hockey players, a wrestler needs nothing more than his *langot* (loin cloth) to engage in a tournament.

Figure 1. Poster for a wrestling tournament between Gulab Singh Pehelwan (left) and Shahab Pehelwan (right), servant of the Princely State of Bahawalpur, scheduled for September 1918 at Chaouni (Cantt), Lahore. The line drawings show the wrestlers holding the gurz *(mace), a traditional wrestling trophy. One foot of each rests on a weighing scale, while a lion is placed above their shoulders. Nestling below them are small illustrations of two other wrestlers, Allah Ditta Pehelwan and Kaka Fizza. The text declares matches will be based on fair play, with a police inspector as judge. The initials L. S. are probably those of the illustrator or the printer.*

Figure 2. Poster for Shahi Dangal *(Grand Tournament) to be held at Berunpur, Garh Shankar from 7 to 22 November 1939. The main attraction is the bout between Tony Leemarv Pehelwan aka* Chamakti hui talwar *(Glittering Sword) 'Champion Australia and New Zealand' and Tiger Daula* Bijli ka current *(Electric Current), 'Champion of All Europe and America, and All India, All in Steel'.*

The body text addressed to the dangal *fans, who have long awaited the event, states: 'Today for the entertainment of the public, we have arranged the match after much hard work'. Tiger Daula 'returns victorious to India after 12 years; credited with 1317 triumphs around the world (in Japan, Canada, America, Argentina, Panama, England, Germany, France, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Egypt etc.). His opponent Leemarv has 'felled' several Indian champions, including Bholu, Mangal Singh and Nizam Goonga Pehelwan. The newspapers carried his challenge to any* pehelwan *from the subcontinent.'*

The rest of the text includes the list of judges and contesting partners. Written prominently below the body text is Khan Sahib Abdul Rehman Khan Jallandhari, presumably the main dangal *organizer. Inscribed perpendicularly between the legs of Tiger Daula is Royal Electric Press, Laiyah, Committee Bagh, supported by S. M. Nasir Durrani.*

Figure 3. Poster for a wrestling tournament between Zubair 'urf' (aka) Jhara[i] *Pehelwan and Antonio Anoki Pehelwan, International Champion (Japan). The hand-tinted photographs are superimposed on a pale turquoise background. Anoki is shown wearing a gold belt emblazoned with an eagle while Jhara carries a mace and is bedecked with a necklace. In stark contrast with the glorified masculinity of the sport, the centre is decorated in floral arabesque (with a similar pattern adorning the trunks of the wrestlers).*

The photographs of the main organizers are within ornate frames. The text includes 'International Yusuf Dangal' inscribed in Urdu, the venue Qaddhafi Stadium at Ferozepur Road, Lahore, and the date, day and time, 9 February, Friday at 3 p.m. Booking starts from nine in the morning. In the bottom right corner in red is 'Design: Chughtai Art Studio, Dil Muhammad Road, Lahore'. The text next to Jhara Pehelwan's right shoulder acknowledges his famous pehelwan *family lineage: the son of (pasra) Pehelwan Sher Babbar, nephew of Bholu Pehelwan Rustum Zaman, grandson of Imam Bakhsh Pehelwan Rustum Hind, nephew of Yaseen Pehelwan, son (pisr) of Gamma Pehelwan Kalluwallah.*

i. *Jhara was a renowned mud-wrestler, the highlight of whose career was his encounter (ending in a draw) with the Japanese legend Anoki in 1979.*

The *akhara* (wrestling pit) is a shrine of strength where earth is turned into gold. It is an assembly hall of invigorated youth. An *akhara* is in an open area where fresh air and sunshine mingle. It is entered after paying obeisance; the earth is saluted and taken up to anoint one's shoulders and head. And then one wrestles; strength is measured against strength and moves and counter moves are born and developed. The sound of slapping thighs and pounding chests fills the air. Grunts and groans of exertion echo ominously. One trounces and in turn, is trounced. Laziness and procrastination are drowned in sweat.

In the days before Partition, wrestling tournaments (annual or bi-annual events) between Punjabi rivals and their foreign counterparts from Australia, Germany, etc. were publicised in the *pehelwan* posters. They featured line drawings of scantily clad moustachioed wrestlers fighting demons and lions. Predictably, the skill of the wrestlers was compared to characteristics of animals: fast as a leopard, eyes of a hawk, courage of a lion, and the unleashed power of a rogue elephant; thus nicknames such as 'Black Cobra', 'White Scorpion', *Babar Sher* (Lion) and *Mast Hathi* (Intoxicated Elephant) abounded. A poster dated 1929 CE *(Figure 2)* illustrates *Shahi Dangal (Grand or Majestic tournament)* between Tiger Daula aka *Bijli ka Current* (Electric Current) and Tony Leemarv alias *Chamakti hui Talwaar* (Glittering Sword).

The text on the poster reduced to a minimum tends to have an ancillary, reinforcing function. *Pehelwan* posters advertise the date of the *dangal*, the names and lineage of the wrestlers, the names of the guests of honour (mostly deputy commissioners and/or superintendents police) and those of the sponsors, and the venue. This would invariably be Lahore where the hot favourites were Minto Park, Railway Stadium, Vyam Shala or the spots adjacent to water reservoirs, tanks and '*talaab*' (pond).

The visuals focus on the wrestlers: a thickset wrestler lifting a *nal* (stone weight) over his head; another swinging a pair of *jori* (pair of wooden clubs); a pair of wrestlers standing at each end of a horizontal plane carrying a *gurz* (mace) in one hand or locked in a *dao* (wrestling move), measuring each other's strength. The visual content has not radically changed from the early days of independent Pakistan. The icons, the symbols, the images remain more or less the same, it is the staging of these images within the localised experiences and spaces that has caused visual repositioning. The images in rainbow colours—fragmented and multiple—capture the chaos of urban spaces where maximum information is packed on a single frame. The brightly coloured and somewhat dismembered maquettes resembling plastic toys are superimposed on the vivid turquoise or green backdrop, giving an evocative image of proletariat taste. The male protagonists—principal wrestlers and their *pathas/chelas* (disciples)—bear on their bodies marks of airbrushed suppleness and cosmetic machismo *(Figure 3)*. Featured in tantalising postures, the *pehelwans* serve as objects of the voyeuristic male gaze; the voyeur is male with a fetish for a macho appeal. Recent technicolour posters are informed by the visual contexts of the theatre and film, and photography of earlier times. As can be recalled, portrait studios used monochromatic backdrops, the scenery rendered in hazy, subdued tones, and the figure emerging detached from the background (without casting a shadow), almost like a cut-out or collage, with visible fore-shortening of figures. This distinctive

4.

5.

Figure 4. Poster for Pakistan Rustum Dangal (wrestling tournament)

Designed symmetrically, the poster is dominated by four famous pehelwans. (From left to right): Zubair Pehelwan 'Fakhr-e Pakistan' (Pride of Pakistan). Kneeling on his left is Dabeer Pehelwan aka Beery, nephew of both Accha Pehelwan Sher (Lion) of Pakistan and Bholu Pehelwan. Next to him is 'Goga Pehelwan, Champion Punjab, brother of Riyaz Pehelwan Chaandi wallah'. The latter two hold a sceptre each. The most accomplished pehelwan stands on the far right—the 'Gold medallist Bhola Pehelwan Gaadi Rustum Lahore, Rustum Punjab, Hero No. 1' shown wearing his medal and a tasselled sash. Two more pehelwans (also with maces) are shown kneeling below the two central ones; the rest are in circular cartouches, and can be distinguished from the organizers who are not bare-chested.

The event is scheduled for 28 December 1984 at the Qaddhafi Stadium, Lahore. The main sponsor appears to be 'Embassy Filter cigarettes Filter No. 1' as two cigarette packs are painted on the green background. Advertised between the legs of Bhola Pehelwan is Khan Baba Hotel, Chowk Chauburji, Lahore, claiming food cooked in Khalis Desi Ghee (pure cooking fat).

Figure 5. Poster for Shaan da Sher Dangal Pakistan, Bahawalpur

The landscape format of the poster is divided into three main horizontal tiers, crowded by photographs of pehelwans. The size of the images denote their importance and prestige. Four pehelwans carrying sceptres occupy the top-most tier while smaller portraits of four others are placed between them. A row of six wrestlers stands below, with the two outermost standing on flowers. The head shots of the rest of the contesting pehelwans are pasted in a zigzag pattern in a horizontal band at the bottom. Superimposed on the wrestlers are heart-shaped necklaces and flower garlands. The text states the names, achievements, the lineage, especially famous pehelwan relatives, and the towns/cities from which the wrestlers hail. Other information includes the day and date of the event, Friday, 24 October 2003, the venue—Bahawalpur Stadium, and price of the ticket, Rs 200. The central vertical column, displays images of the thekedars *(organizers) and a smiling boy, presumably a son.*

ground-figure relationship is still noticeable in the posters that adorn the *akharas* today. In fact, the latest posters show wrestlers collaged over popular European tourist spots such as Keukenhof Tulip Gardens near Amsterdam (not shown).

The posters attempt to retrieve several histories of engagement between the politically resonant aspect of public art and the high-spirited connoisseurship of the everyday. Until recently when such posters had been in rampant circulation they took to the typical Lahore public wall, with its graffiti, handbills for tuition classes, peeling election posters and advertisements for miracle cures; the artist appeared to be stimulated by the smoothness and all-over gloss of the printed vinyl poster that has, in the age of globalisation, replaced the older hand painted posters on cinema marquees and hoardings throughout metropolitan Pakistan.

Nicholas Mirzoeff, in his essay 'The Subject of Visual Culture', speaks of the specific qualities of 'the transverse gaze,' the gaze that is the 'transient, transnational, transgendered way of seeing'.[1] In another essay he quotes Fernando Ortiz, stating 'trans-culture is the product of an encounter between an existing culture or subculture and a newly arrived migrant culture that violently transforms them both and in the process creates a neo-culture that is itself immediately subject to trans-culturation'. Similarly, Lahore, the hub of 'the culture of the *akhara*' in Punjab, is a curious city these days. Sleek sedans with smoked windows, crawl through boulevards hoping to avoid the tide of pedestrians that precariously tangoes through sweltering heat and blinding light. The designer in the walled city responds to these contradictions and his posters share attributes common to the subaltern culture of all major metropolises: exploiting the glitz that drives such large-scale urban economies, and wrestling to make philosophy mirthful and entertainment meaningful.

Pehelwan posters offer evidence that many artists/designers speak their own honest language, marshalling visual and verbal elements skilfully with force and eloquence. The best of them rescue concepts from the cliché, preserving intact original meanings as well as originality. Their grammar of design is highly wrought, yet beyond paradigms.

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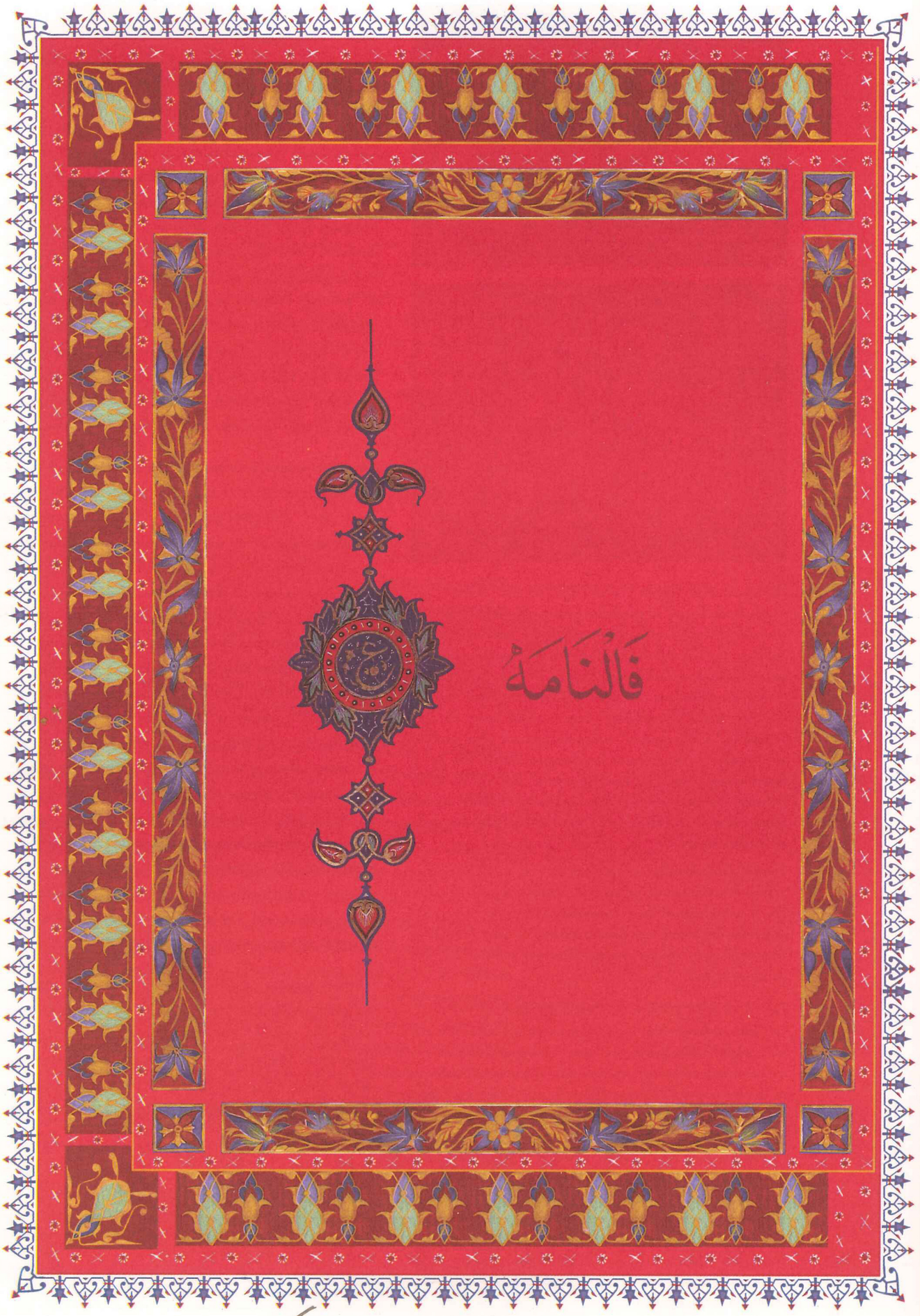
2. MIRZOEFF, NICHOLAS *The Visual Culture Reader*. Routledge, 2002 (p. 18).



ADEELA SULEMAN

Fal DIVINATION FOR MEN SEEKING A BRIDE

ADEELA SULEMAN

The medallions and borders are inspired from a fifteenth century Qur'anic manuscript from the Royal Library of Sultan Abul Muzaffar Mehmood Shah Wali of Jaunpur (AH 851/1447 CE). The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi.

Figures on pages 74, 76&77 have been re-painted from the original by Naveid Iqbal.

(Below): The parrot symbolizes the divination by a totaywallah (man with a parrot).

A range of methods of divination have been formulated in Islamic cultures. Variously termed as *fal, tira, zajr, kihana* and *jafr*, they are derived from *ilm al-huruf* or the letters of the alphabet, *hisaab al-jummal* (numbers), *al-Asma al-Husna* (God's beautiful names), *'ilm al-nujum* (the stars), *Fal-i Qur'an* (words and letters from the Qur'an), *Fal-i Ambya* (divination by the prophets) or verses by poets such as Hafiz (d.792 AH/1390 CE).[i]

The *falnama* is a book of divination or omens to guide decision-making for various issues—financial, social or marital. Historically *falnamas* were composed for rulers planning military campaigns or facing difficult political dilemmas. A majority of these works were made in Iran, Turkey and India from 1540–1630 CE, and included several from the Mughal era.[ii] They were large illustrated manuscripts 'often featuring figures and scenes from the life of the Prophet (PBUH)—also taken into account in interpretations.' Manuscripts also comprise folklore about heroes and rulers.

Generally frowned upon because of their association with superstition, such predictive practices were legitimized by finding Qur'anic roots. In fact, Divination of Codex (*Fal-i Mushaf*) is often inserted at the end of the Qur'an. Less formal ways of divination include the *totaywallah* 'man with a parrot', usually seated outside a shrine (*mazaar*) whose parrot is trained to single out an envelope containing a message and present it to the augury-seeker with its beak.

Falnama Baraey Shaadi (*Falnama* for Marriage) is a translation from the *Sacha Falnama Qalandri*.[iii] The rich colours and embellishment resemble that of an invitation to a wedding—appropriate for a 'document' foretelling the qualities of the destined wife.

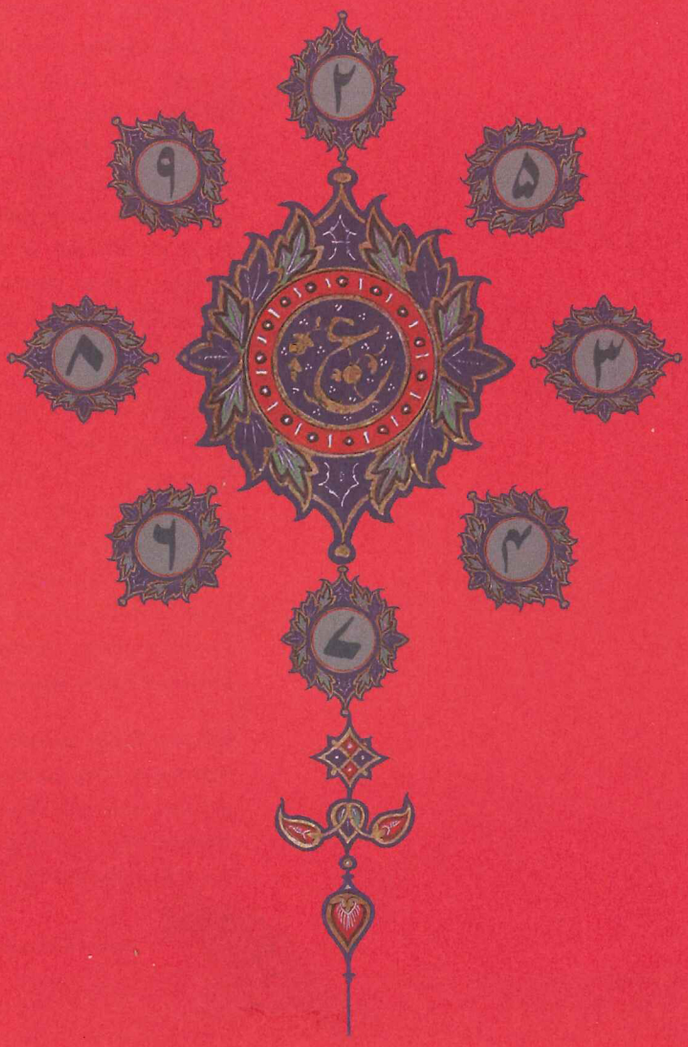
Shaadi Mubarak! Wedding Felicitations!

i. MERI, JOSEF W. 'Divination' by Christiane Gruber in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia Volume 1, A-K, Index 2005* Taylor & Francis (pp. 209–210).

ii. SCHIMMEL, ANNEMARIE *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture*. Reaktion Books, 2004 (pp. 140–141).

iii. JAHINGIRI, SHAZADA AL-HAJ MUSHTAQ AND QALANDRI, ABBASI KASHFI (compiled) Tareef Printers, Mushtaq Book Corner, Urdu Bazaar, Lahore (p. 44).

PLACE THE INDEX FINGER ON ONE OF
THE NUMERALS BELOW AND DISCOVER
THE QUALITIES OF YOUR BRIDE-TO-BE!



LOOK UP THE TEXT AGAINST THE SELECTED NUMERAL:

٢

A beauty, fair of complexion, plump, with a jovial and saucy nature. Fond of perfume, nice clothes & cosmetics. Intelligent, understanding, will love her husband and provide him comfort.

٣

Clever and intelligent, pretty with a sweet voice. Simple, belonging to a middle-class family. Whimsical in nature, may find it difficult to stick to a decision. Faithful but occasionally annoying due to a penchant for argument.

٤

Good-looking, with medium brown complexion, a slim figure and large eyes. She has a beauty spot on her bosom; has a lively temperament; will have a good relationship with a good-natured husband but will irritate a serious one.

٥

Respectable with a proud disposition. Enjoys power and glory. She is fond of nice clothes and luxurious living. She will give love and comfort to her husband but be unwilling to follow him blindly in every matter.

٦

Corpulent, with medium brown complexion, narrow eyes and long hair, she has a beauty spot on the right forearm. A forebearing and serious disposition, and a knack for housekeeping; will love her husband and provide him comfort.

٧

Beautiful, with a slim figure, large eyes and thick hair, a beauty spot on her chin; suitable for a wealthy and hedonistic husband but not for a poor and ill-tempered one; housekeeping not a strength. Respectable family.

٨

Dark complexioned, with a slim figure and a slight defect in one eye; stubborn, argumentative and hostile towards her husband; good at housekeeping but will be a nuisance to her husband and his relatives.

٩

Fair, plump with reddish eyes; with a belligerent and angry disposition, unable to tolerate anything against her will; will be faithful and have a good relationship with her husband if he is forbearing. Family background respectable.

READ

1.

باقاعدہ تصدیق شدہ اشاعت ABC CERTIFIED پاکستان کا سب سے بڑا روزنامہ

THE DAILY JANG RAWALPINDI

روزنامہ جنگ راولپنڈی

SUNDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2006

پبلی میر خلیل الرحمٰن

جلد 48 | قمری 1427 رجب 30 | 15-10-2006 | 208 | 64 صفحات | 10 روپے

GM CABLES

112*110 ٹرمز آپ کی 20 ٹرمز آپ کی

ناسمرا فخش

بنت جبیل سے پسپائی کا اسرائیلی اعتراف

بمباری سے 21 شہری شہید

جھڑپوں میں صیہونی فوج کے 9 ملک

حزب اللہ کے میزائل تھے، جنوبی لبنان کے سرحدی دیہات پر بمباری سے 6 شہری جاں بحق، کوفی ولیزا رائس نئی تجاویز لے کر دوبارہ اسرائیل پہنچ گئیں، جارحیت کیخلاف دنیا بولے تو امریکا اور اسرائیل لبنان میں اپنی شکست سے سیاسی فوائد حاصل نہ کریں، نعیم قاسم، فلسطین و لبنانی قیدیوں کی رہائی کیلئے حزب اللہ سے مل کر کوششیں نہیں کریں گے، محمود عباس

بش انتظامیہ نے کانگریس کو دھوکا دیکر بھارت امریکا جوہری معاہدہ منظور کرایا

بھارتی ایٹمی سائنسدانوں کے سیریا میں رابطے پر پابندی تھی جس میں سابقہ و پاکستانی ایٹمی ماہر بھی شامل

آزاد حکومت کی بحیرہ معاہدات کو پیش کرنے صدر پرویز کی سرد مہری پر تنقید

پنجاب اور سرحد کے کشمکشاتوں میں بارش

آسٹریلیا میں روزنامہ جریدہ پاکستان کا اسکان

ایم کیو ایم کو صدر پرویز پر اعتماد ہے

وزراء و مشیروں کے استعفوں کا مکمل معاملہ خوش اسلوبی سے حل ہو گیا الطاف حسین

صدر مملکت نے وزراء اور مشیروں کے استعفوں پر پیدا ہونے والی صورتحال پر ایم کیو ایم کو اپنے ہاتھ میں لیا دو خوش آمدید

پیشگی اجازت کے بغیر ایک درجن بھر کنٹینر نہیں جائیں گے گورنر سندھ

ہم نہ ہوں گے تو بلوچستان میں کور نہ راج ہوگا فضل الرحمٰن

حزب اختلاف کیلئے باعزت راستہ تلاش کرنے کیلئے تیار ہیں، چودھری شجاعت

بھارت نے پاکستانی فوجی افسر کی ہلاکت کا جھوٹا واپس لے لیا

متنازعہ کشمیر میں کوئی پاکستانی فوجی افسر ہلاک نہیں ہوا، ترجمان بھارتی وزارت دفاع

کراچی میں ایم کیو ایم کے کارکن کی ہلاکت

کراچی میں پولیس کے ہاتھوں ایک شخص ہلاک

کراچی میں ایک شخص کی ہلاکت

کراچی میں ایک شخص کی ہلاکت

کراچی میں ایک شخص کی ہلاکت

Jang 'WAR' THE URDU NEWSPAPER
Promoting a Culture of Liberation or Subservience?

AASIM SAJJAD AKHTAR

Figure 1. (Left) The current title piece for the Jang newspaper was designed by calligrapher Munshi Abdul Majeed in 1972 CE. It is written in the Nastaliq script that is characterized by a fluid cursive style with moderate ascenders, curved descenders and elongated horizontal strokes. The script, popular for its legibility, is the most extensively used Urdu font in the country.

On the front page, numerous stories compete for the attention of the reader, the guiding principle being that a maximum of news items be accommodated. Consequently, several design elements work together on the page to give the impression of organized chaos that achieves a sense of urgency in a style of composition referred to as the Circus or Razzle Dazzle.

To maintain visual coherence, the Nastaliq is used throughout the body of the paper as well. Textual hierarchy is established by size variations and the corresponding weight change; the largest is reserved for the headline in which words are embellished with flourishes and stacked within counter spaces to squeeze in as many as possible. Articles are organized into self-contained units and consist of a headline followed by two or three subheads and the body text. The subheads are either in black or white, with the white text appearing on black or grey horizontal bands zigzagging across the page.

Despite the fact that the page is divided into an eight-column vertical grid, a complex composition of rectangles of different column widths cuts across it, creating a visually horizontal format. This provides a flexibility which allows the layout to be dictated by the news.

To maximize the story count, none of the features are complete on the front page; they become 'teasers' requiring a 'jump' or continuation to another page. The text starts with an indent and may flow into two or three columns and, to avoid interruptions, there are no paragraphs—a clever method which leaves no room for widows or orphans.[i] *This is helped by the structure of the Urdu script in which letters are joined to each other, obviating the need for hyphenation. The body text is consistent: a set point size with even leading*[ii] *and justified text with the obligatory adjustable kerning*[iii] *offer a uniform grey texture.*

Multiple photographs usually hang from the subhead but in certain cases may float within the column. Each image is enclosed with a runaround rule, is accompanied by explanatory text, the cutline. The lead story and other significant event images are emphasized in colour. When appropriate, a thumbnail will appear alongside the piece, usually of the author or a prominent personality, as half-column mugshots.

Advertisements are conventionally restricted to below the fold and are subject to the same flexibility as the news pieces, but are usually larger and more prominent than any individual item on the front page. (Reduced from 38.5x58.5 cm)

i. Widow: an incomplete line at the top of a column; orphan: a single word left at the end of the paragraph.
ii. Leading: the space between the lines.
iii. Kerning: The space between the words or letters.

The visual orgy of outrageous headlines and minute script news items that greets the reader of the Urdu newspaper is as definitive a feature of the Urdu print press as what is actually said in its pages. On the one hand, the chaotic construction of a page in the Urdu newspaper is representative of the turbulent peripheral modernity that has characterised societies such as Pakistan's since a relatively early stage of the British colonial experiment. On the other, it is a reflection of the historically evolved storytelling traditions—although the most celebrated of such traditions is an oral one—that constitute the imaginary of what the subcontinent has been, is, and will be.

Sensationalism is a key attribute of the Urdu press; it gives it colour, both literally and figuratively; and it also ensures that the information being offered is adequately rhetoricised so that it invites debate and even dissent without necessarily inciting social disorder. Meanwhile the highly personalised social relationships that are one of the defining features of the polity are also reflected in abundance—*qayadat aur awam* (leadership and the people); *pir aur mureed* (saint and disciple); more generally, patron and client. In some ways then the Urdu paper, both in its appearance and its content, is a reflection of the society that it speaks to.

However, it also plays a role more aggressive than mere reflection. For European commentators such as the oft-quoted Benedict Anderson, the print 'revolution' represents one of the critical junctures of modern nation-state formation. And while there is no reason to believe that the historical trajectory of the postcolonial state necessarily mirrors that of the modern European state, it is difficult to contest the claim that the vernacular print press in British India played a major role in shaping nationalist discourse, particularly that of the Muslims.

In the turbulent early decades of the twentieth century, the Urdu newspaper was arguably the primary medium of self-articulation for the Muslim nationalist elite in British India. A relatively privileged and educated group, Muslims in Uttar Pradesh and, to a lesser extent, in Punjab thrived upon the opportunities that the print press afforded them to assert their identity,

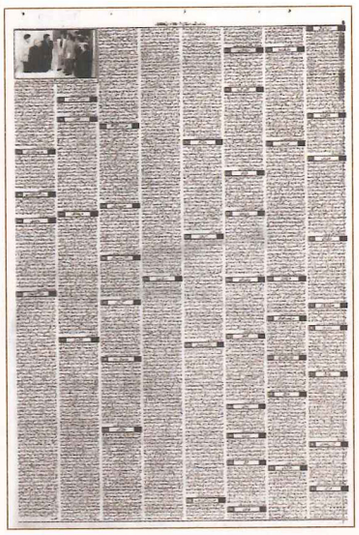
apparently in terms of their religious difference but more crucially as a separate political community. That only some of the prominent Muslims who actually ran newspapers were religious in their personal lives did not prevent virtually all of the Urdu press from being a repository for large doses of religious polemic.[1] No doubt the resort of the Muslim nationalists to the use of religious idiom in the pursuit of their political goals has been a legacy that has vitally coloured the political and cultural landscape of postcolonial Pakistan.

The Urdu print press in Pakistan has generally been a flagbearer of the pillars of the Islam-state dialectic that continues to have an overbearing impact on social life in the country. The role of the Urdu press must be put into context: from a very early stage, the Urdu language itself came to be viewed (by dissidents) as one of the key hegemonic symbols employed by a state oligarchy intent on impeding the establishment of an organic political process. Such a process would in all likelihood have thrown up a power-sharing arrangement in which the very antithesis of everything that the Urdu language and its requisite culture seemingly represented—the Bengali would be predominant on account of the eastern wing's demographic majority. Urdu as a cultural symbol has consistently been championed by a small elite that perceives itself as descended from a long line of foreign conquerors.

It would be naïve to suggest that the Urdu press is a monolith however, or to gloss over the overt confrontations that have taken place between the state and the Urdu press at various junctures. In particular, there have been not insignificant periods of Pakistan's history when progressive and independent journalism has flourished. It is worth noting that the state has actively suppressed what it has perceived to be journalistic initiatives that represent a threat to the feted 'greater national interest'. Most notably, the government forcibly took over the Progressive Papers enterprise in the late 1950s, supposedly because it was a propaganda machine of the dreaded communists. During the Zia decade, journalists and writers of all kinds were subjected to the worst state repression as part of a more comprehensive effort to eradicate the politics of class that had exploded onto the scene in the late 1960s and was further cultivated—albeit erratically—during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's time in power.

That having been said, for the most part, the Urdu press has remained a reliable ally of the state. A look at *Jang*—by far the most widely circulated paper in the country—provides an insight into the general trend of the Urdu press over time. Founded a couple of years prior to the creation of Pakistan, *Jang* came to be viewed, along with its competitor (then and now), *Nawa-i Waqt*, as the main organ of the Pakistan movement. In the rather more epic version of the story, *Jang* founder Mir Khalil-ur-Rahman is said to have spent many days and nights being not only the editor of the newspaper but also the office sweeper. Of course, the Rahman family is now one of the richest business groups in the country. One is entitled to put this down to good hard work, but it is no coincidence that even after the creation of Pakistan, *Jang* has remained a militant supporter—simply by championing its own name and also through its unerring exhortations of the 'Pakistan' cause—of the myth of indivisible sovereignty of the Pakistani nation that has been so carefully cultivated by the state. *Jang*,

2.



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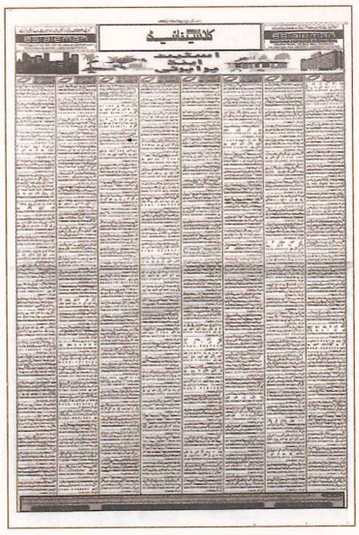

Figure 2. This broadsheet carries the continuation of the stories featured on the front page.

Figure 3. The classifieds play a major role in the increased sales on Sundays e.g. the edition on 30 May 2007 carried 30 pages (of a total of 42) dedicated solely to advertising. This does not include the advertisements on the remaining pages.

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Figures 4–7. The title Jang *forms a ligature with the name of the city from where that particular edition is issued (Figure 1) and is placed at an angle in reverse on a black rectangle.*

Jang or 'War' is the most widely circulated daily Urdu newspaper in Pakistan. It began publication in 1940 CE from Delhi and was named after the Second World War which was its primary concern at the time. Soon after, however, the newspaper aligned itself with the separatist All India Muslim League and became pro-establishment of Pakistan; with the result that it was declared an 'extremist publication' by the British government. Jang's founder and editor Mir Khalil-ur-Rahman published its first issue on 15 October 1947 CE as an evening paper from Karachi, which was the capital of Pakistan at the time. These earliest editions comprised four pages, with six columns to a page and cost one anna per issue.[i] *Today, the daily has grown to twenty pages, costs seven rupees and is simultaneously published from Lahore, Rawalpindi, Quetta and London, in addition to Karachi. It has an estimated circulation of over 800,000 copies per day and a readership of over seven million.*[ii]

i. Daily *Jang*, *Roznama Jang ke Pachas Saal* (50 years of the Daily *Jang*) 14 October 1997.

ii. http://www.jang.com.pk/adtariff/newtariff/facts.html

like many of its contemporaries, has never projected favourably the demands of nationalist movements, including that of the Bengalis. It has never been a vehicle of reconciliation between Pakistan and 'big brother' India (although changing geopolitical winds in recent times have necessitated a change in tone). Needless to say, it vigorously celebrated Pakistan's 'Islamic' bomb. The list could go on and on.

Of course it is argued by many observers—and rightfully so—that the state has never permitted the press to develop a meaningful level of autonomy. Most important in this regard is the fact that the majority of Urdu newspapers derive the chunk of their revenues from government advertisements rather than actual sales. A cursory glance at *Jang* and its competitors corroborates the claim that newspapers rely heavily on advertisements—on most weekends and relatively often on weekdays too, advertisements take up much greater space than actual news. Intriguingly, advertisements offer a distinct visual contrast to the cluttered norm of countless news stories, a clear indicator that profit-making needs have as much to do with what the newspaper looks like as any other factor. Indeed, the press in Pakistan, like anywhere else in the world, is arguably more in tune to the imperatives of the market than to the public demand (if one can call it that) for information.

Then again does *Jang* face the same financial constraints as any of its rivals? Considering that *Jang* circulates more copies daily than all of its English and Urdu contemporaries combined, the greater and greater proportions of *Jang* dedicated to advertisements suggest less that the newspaper is under financial duress and more that it simply wants to make more money, like any good corporate media conglomerate. The *Jang* group was involved in a very public spat with the Nawaz Sharif government that preceded the military regime of Musharraf, ostensibly over 'press freedom', yet when the government resumed its policy of buying advertisements from the *Jang* group, the epic claims of the *Jang* group's great sacrifices for press freedom magically dissipated.

The Pakistani press has long been prone to self-censorship, and *Jang* is no different from its competitors in this regard. Whether one puts this down to the advertisement quandary or any other such constraint, the fact of the matter is that the Urdu press has historically been unwilling to challenge the 'sacred cows' that are the pillars of the ubiquitous state ideology. Certain matters (read: defence of the

indivisible nation, Islam as state ideology, etc.) are off limits. And to the extent that *Jang* is compelled to print controversial material simply because certain stories cannot be suppressed, the design logic of the newspapers comes in handy. Amongst the many headlines and multi-column stories that one scans on a *Jang* page, the most dangerous story of all will be tucked away into an inconspicuous corner, with a minute headline. The naked eye may even miss it altogether.

This is not to suggest that the Urdu press does not carry dissenting stories, which it has and continues to do. Stories of resistance to high-handedness—whether on the part of the state or influential individuals/groups—abound. One will often come across elaborate colour-picture spreads detailing the horror stories of a victimised family of bonded labourers, sharecropping tenants or a brutalised rape survivor. In more recent times, the public resentment against the army's monopolisation of resources and state affairs more generally has been reflected in regular anecdotes as well as more systematic reports on the army's abuse of power. Yet, there is always a clear limit that is never breached.

In recent times, the phenomenon of *laffafa* journalism (literally journalism of the envelope) has further eroded the credibility of the Urdu press. The implications are obvious—that it is not necessarily what really should be in the news that actually makes it, but rather what is perceived to be either acceptable to the powers that be and/or profitable to journalists and editors.

In the final analysis, it is worth comparing the Urdu press to its English and vernacular counterparts. On the whole, the English press tends to be far bolder in terms of its willingness to overstep the information boundaries—at least periodically—that the state has systematically enforced over a period of time. The Sindhi press is arguably the most radical of all, but probably the most vulnerable to coercion. On the whole, the readerships of the English/vernacular and Urdu press are dramatically different. It is the modernist elite that relies on the English press for its news; the suggestion is that even the most explosive stories and commentaries are hardly likely to incite rebellion amongst the class that remains the primary beneficiary of the prevailing configuration of power. In contrast, the deep sense of injustice that prevails across Sindh is reflected in the posture of the Sindhi press, but the state—for the most part—continues to contain and co-opt the mainstream strands of Sindhi nationalism, in spite of the best efforts of dissident journalists. On the other hand, the Urdu newspaper caters to the majority of Pakistanis and even asserts their grievances but at the same time skilfully plays off the impulse to dissent against the imperatives of social order. It also delves into minute details over local issues, thereby effectively acting as the only source of information for its readers (or proxy readers given that much of what is in the papers is related by readers to 'non-readers').

For the most part, perhaps because of the lack of more alternative sources, the readers of the Urdu newspaper have no reason to doubt the veracity of what they read, or even suggest that stories are exaggerated or sensationalised. In fact the Urdu press is so distinctive that it would almost amount to heresy for its visual structure or its content to be

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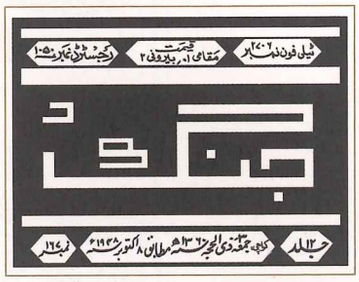

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Figures 8–11. The title pieces for Jang, 1947–1950 CE.

Figure 8. The title piece for the first issue of Jang published from Karachi on 15 October 1947 CE was designed by Munshi Abdul Majeed. It is in Nastaliq script anchored by an organic, decorative cartouche. Majeed also designed the four subsequent changes, the last being in 1972 CE (see Figure 5).

Figure 9. Designed in October 1948 CE, the title piece is in stark contrast to the earlier version; written in the angular Kufic script reversed in white from a black background.

Figure 10. Interestingly also designed in October 1948, this rendition is very simple, with almost no embellishment.

Figure 11. Redesigned in October 1950 CE, the title piece is placed within a symmetrical, decorative frame.

radically overhauled. And in any case the Urdu press is not necessarily destined to be a vehicle of stagnation and status quo, although as has been argued here, this is what it has effectively been for most of Pakistan's existence. Ultimately the posture of the Urdu press is but a microcosm of the various hegemonic constructs that underlie the ongoing experiment with Pakistani nationhood. In general, sensationalism, the championing of a language associated with a narrow elite (albeit projected as a lingua franca), and even *laffafa* journalism are not attributes exclusive to the Urdu press in Pakistan. In many other contexts where similar phenomena exist, the press still retains a minimum level of commitment to providing objective information and even inciting positive action. It can be argued that the Urdu press can still forge a commitment to a liberationist culture, something that it has come close to doing but never quite done in the past. For this to happen however, it may well be necessary to move beyond *Jang*.

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1.

سید حسین بخاری
نقشبندی مجددی غفاری
دربار عالیہ حسین آباد شریف الارکانہ
قبر والے
سید حبیب احمد شاہ بخاری
سائیں مختار اللہ شاہ بخاری
سائیں سید شفیق احمد شاہ بخاری
احمد حسینی نقشبندی
جماعت حسینیہ نقشبندیہ اہلسنت ملیر کراچی
تعاون: جماعت اہلسنت ملیر کراچی
محمد عمر قادری
شاہدی نقشبندی
حاجی منصور حسین سومرو
محمد اکرم قریشی
اختر القادری
مرکزی چیئرمین
انجمن فیضان سایۂ پنجتن
بمقام آستانہ عالیہ ستیائی شریف
منجانب جماعت محمودیہ قادریہ بدین، پاکستان
العباس پرنٹنگ پریس، شاہ لطیف روڈ بدین
عطیہ اشتہار
حاجی محمد صالح سوہو
حاجی غلام حسین سوہو
حاجی مصری سوہو
مرکزی جماعت محمودیہ قادریہ پاکستان

Figure 1. (Left) A wall with fragments of Ijtimaa' posters pasted over each other. The standard size is 50.5x76 cm, other common sizes being 46x58 cm and 76x101 cm (diptych). They are mostly printed on 68 gram offset paper and in very rare instances on art paper. Generally, the print run is around 200 to 250, however for larger congregations like the death anniversary of a revered saint, the quantity may be increased to 500.

Ijtimaa'
POSTERS ADVERTISING RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

SOHAIL ZUBERI

Tamaam ahl-e Islam se iss mutabarrik taqreeb mein shirkat ki appeal ki jaati hai. 'This is an appeal to all followers of Islam to attend this holy congregation'.

Disseminating information about upcoming religious events and inviting attendance, *Ijtimaa'*[i] posters *(Figures 1–12, 25&36)* are pasted on walls, specially in the vicinity of mosques and shrines and where the pedestrian traffic is heavy e.g. near bus stops. They are ephemeral in nature and might be covered the very next day by news of yet another event, or removed by civic authorities on their cleanliness drives; some may, however, remain untouched for months, disintegrating naturally with the passage of time.

The content may be an invitation to a sermon, announcement of an *urs* (death anniversary), celebration of *Mehfil-e Naat*[ii] or *Eid Milad-un Nabi*,[iii] admission announcements to seminaries, call for entries to competitions, awards and certificate ceremonies for the recitation of the Qur'an; some even urge attendance at the funeral, in absentia, of a martyr.

The posters are instantly recognisable because of the signature treatment of saturated calligraphy, employing the popular typefaces, *Nastaliq* and *Naskh*, chosen for their legibility and economy of space. Also incorporated is handwritten calligraphy, though of late, digitally generated typography has emerged since it is expeditious. The script is in Urdu, although dates and addresses also utilize Roman numerals. They are distinct from the accepted version of a poster which uses relatively few words to convey the pertinent content (as the viewer does not have the leisure to read the text). Hierarchy is established by increasing the size of the more important information such as the title of the event, location and date (according to both the Muslim Lunar and the Julian calendars). The rest of the text may be a list of names of eminent delegates and participants attending the congregation. The absence of Qur'anic verses may indicate a desire to refrain from involuntary desecration.

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i. *Ijtimaa'* meaning congregation.
ii. Gatherings to recite praise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
iii. Birth anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

2–4.

5–7.

Figures 2–8. The Ijtimaa' *posters are frequently printed in a cost-effective single colour like black or blue. Symmetry—an important element of Islamic art and design—is witnessed in the placement of typography and the frames around them.*

Figure 2. Ijtimaa' Congregation.

Figure 3. Shab Bedari Yaum-e Aza
'Night-long prayer gathering'
Size: 102x152 cm.

Figure 4. Duroos-e Qur'an-o Hadith
'Lecture on Qur'an and Hadith—Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'.

Figure 5. Daura Tafseer Aayat Qur'an
'Lecture on the interpretation of the Qur'an'.

Figure 6. Daakhlay Jari Hain
'Announcement for admissions to a seminary'.

Figure 7. Ghaibana Namaz-e Janaaza
'Call for funeral prayers of a martyr in absentia'.

Figure 8. (Right) Syeda Amna Conference.

غلبۂ اسلام، فروغ عشق رسول صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم، اور انقلابِ نظامِ مصطفےٰ کے لئے

عظیم الشان

سیدہ آمنہ رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہا کانفرنس

مؤرخہ ۲ اکتوبر بروز ہفتہ بعد نماز عشاء بمقام جامع مسجد آرام باغ کراچی

مجاہد اسلام، سرمایہ اہلسنت، فخر ملت، استاذ العلماء قائد انقلاب حضرت علامہ

صاحبزادہ

پیر محمد افضل قادری

مدظلہ العالی

مرکزی امیر عالمی تنظیم اہلسنت

زیر نگرانی: قائد نوجوان فخر اہلسنت حضرت علامہ
صاحبزادہ آصف حسین ضیائی
کنوینئر عالمی تنظیم اہلسنت کراچی

مناظر اہلسنت قاطع نجدیت حضرت علامہ
عبدالتواب اچھروی مدظلہ العالی (متوقع آمد)

خصوصی شرکت
حضرت علامہ صاحبزادہ
محمد ضیاء اللہ صاحب قادری
مرکزی ناظم اعلیٰ عالمی تنظیم اہلسنت

حضرت علامہ
مفتی پیر
سید محمد عارف شاہ صاحب اویسی
سرپرست کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

خطیب اہلسنت
حضرت علامہ
محمد صفدر شاکر صاحب رضوی
رکن کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

مناظر اہلسنت
حضرت علامہ
محمد جہانگیر صاحب نقشبندی
رکن کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

مقرر شعلہ بیان
حضرت علامہ حافظ
سید محمد وقاص ہاشمی صاحب
رکن کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

فاضل نوجوان
حضرت علامہ حافظ
قاری بختیار علی نعیمی صاحب
رکن کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

خطیب ملت
حضرت علامہ
محمد محب الرحمن محمدی صاحب
خطیب مدینہ مسجد کریم آباد کراچی

خطیب اہلسنت
حضرت علامہ
عباس رضا باروی صاحب
رکن کنوینئر کمیٹی کراچی

فون نمبر
کراچی: 4852042
لاہور: 0333-4323523
گجرات مرکز: 521401-2
اسلام آباد: 051-4440544

بجانب: عالمی تنظیم اہلسنت کراچی

9.

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Figures 9–11. Posters printed in two colour, utilize red as the preferred choice, complemented by either blue or green.

Figure 9. Mehfil-e Husn-e Qirat
'Gathering for the recitation of the Qur'an'.
Listed are the 56 names of the participants along with the name and address of the mosque with which they are affiliated. Information is organized with typography placed within arches, elaborate cartouches and basic shapes, generally employing an underlying horizontal grid. The type is reversed to create contrast. (Reduced from 51x76 cm)

Figure 10. Final Muqabla Hifz-o Husn-e Qirat
'Final competition for the recitation of the Qur'an'.

Figure 11. (Right) Ijtimaa' Dars Bukhari, Taqseem Isnaad
'Congregation for a lecture on the Bukhari traditions and a certificate-awarding ceremony'.

Figure 12. (Right) Urs[i] Khwaja Muhammad Masoom Sahib
'Death Anniversary of Khwaja Muhammad Masoom Sahib'.
To attract attention, posters for special events like an urs may be printed in multi-colour.

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i. *Urs* is an annual festival in commemoration of the death of a saint or a prominent religious personality. *Urs* literally means wedding, but is used here as the occasion is considered the union of the spirit of the saint with God, which occurs at death. In the subcontinent, the *urs* is advertised extensively and devotees travel great distances to participate in the festivities which are usually held at the tomb or shrine.

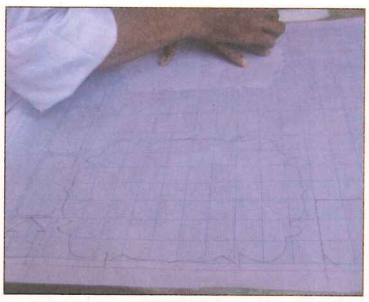
11.

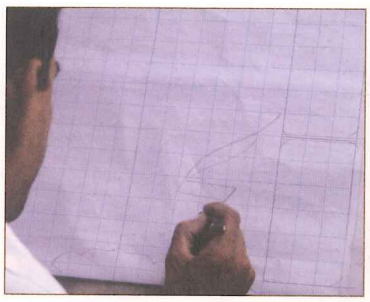
اجتماع
درس بخاری
تقسیم اسناد
عظیم محدث استاذ العلماء
شیخ القرآن والحدیث علامہ مفتی
مولانا محمد عبداللہ امجد چھتوی صاحب
موضوع
درس بخاری آخری حدیث
عظیم الشان استاذ العلماء
شارح مشکوٰۃ و موطا امام مالک
شیخ القرآن والحدیث
مولانا محمد رفیق اثری صاحب
جلالپور پیروالا
موضوع
تعمیر مساجد میں حدیث کا کردار
بتاریخ 24 شعبان 1425 بمطابق
10 اکتوبر 2004 بروز اتوار وقت شام 5 بجے
مقام: ٹیولپس کلب لان A-B
نزد عوامی مرکز شارع فیصل کراچی
فضیلۃ الشیخ محترم
پروفیسر ڈاکٹر محمد ادریس زبیر صاحب
موضوع: احمدیت سے اسلام کی تحفظ حیثیت
استاذ العلماء فضیلۃ الشیخ
مولانا خلیل الرحمن لکھوی صاحب
استاذ العلماء فضیلۃ الشیخ
مولانا عمر فاروق سعیدی صاحب
فضیلۃ الشیخ جناب محترم
مولانا عبدالرحمن چیمہ صاحب
موضوع: ختم نبوت
فضیلۃ الشیخ جناب محترم
مولانا محمد ابراہیم بھٹی صاحب
موضوع: علم دین کی اہمیت
جناب محترم
شجاع اللہ صاحب (لاہور)
موضوع: اقرأ چینل کے تقاضے
فضیلۃ الشیخ مولانا
مولانا محمد شریف حصاروی صاحب
جناب محترم
ڈاکٹر محمد نواز اثری صاحب
جناب محترم
مولانا عبدالرحمن صاحب
خطیب پاکستان نیوی
اسٹیج سیکرٹری
جناب اختر عثمان صاحب
تلاوت قرآن مجید
جناب عبدالقادر
جناب ثانی اثری سید فیاض احمد صاحب
جناب اختر عثمان
جناب محمد عثمان
نظم
جناب عبدالماجد صاحب
خطبۂ جمعۃ المبارک 8 اکتوبر
شیخ الحدیث مولانا محمد رفیق اثری حفظہ اللہ
جامع مسجد سعد بن ابی وقاص ڈیفنس سوسائٹی
فیز 4 نزد دشار پارک میں ارشاد فرمائیں گے
وقت اب سے
خوشخبری
پروگرام میں کتب امام بخاری
منظور کالونی کی طرف سے خصوصی
رعایت کے ساتھ کتب، کیسٹیں
سی ڈیز دستیاب
ہونگی۔
نوٹ
خواتین کے پردہ کے لیے
ٹیولپس لان سائے میں اہتمام کیا گیا ہے
خبردار
ٹیولپس کلب کے اندر یا باہر کوئی
بھی شخص اسٹال وغیرہ کیلئے
نعت ذکر سے شکریہ
شعبہ جات
القرآن الکریم حفظ، ناظرہ، تجوید
ملامات (درس نظامی، علوم اسلامیہ عصریہ، عربی، اردو، انگلش)
وفاق المدارس
فہم القرآن الکریم برائے خواتین
تربیت طلبہ و طالبات برجمعہ ہفتہ وار کلاسس
ملی عصریہ مونٹیسوری تا ہائی اثری
دارالافتاء
تصنیف و تالیف
کمپیوٹر
تحفظ قوانین اور جو دل کے فضل اور اس توفیق سے اکثر رہنے ذیل
شعبہات نوازت طلبہ و خدمت خلق میں اپنی اور ادارے کے مطابق
کوشاں ہیں۔ اللہ عزوجل قبول فرمائے اور حاسدین کے شر سے محفوظ رکھے
ہوا جس سے اسال 1425ھ میں فراغت پانے والوں کی تعداد 72 اکتوبر 1996ء سے سہ ماہی ماہنامہ علمیہ ندا
کا تعلیم ہے نیز حفظ مکمل کرنے والوں کو تحفظ حفاظت ہیں۔
تعداد طلبہ عملہ (ا) شعبہ القرآن اسلامیہ عصریہ درس اور امتحانات میں
(ب) شعبہ تعلیم القرآن کی تعداد اور ایک تعداد میں۔ (ج) شعبہ تربیت طالبات
میں 5 معلمات ہیں۔ (د) شعبہ اسلامیہ عصریہ میں 7 معلمات ہیں۔
الداعی الی الخیر: محمد افضل الاثری مدیر شیخ الحدیث المعہد الاسلامی ایڈمنسٹریشن سوسائٹی بلاک 31/C-2 کراچی
0300-2160113
4525502

12.

17 دسمبر 2005 بروز ہفتہ
بعد نماز عشاء
عرس مبارک
12 واں
مرکزی سالانہ
عظیم الشان
تاجدار
موہڑی شریف
خواجہ محمد معصوم صاحب
رحمۃ اللہ علیہ
اللہ ھو
صدائے موہڑی شریف
یکدمانہ صحبت با اولیا
بہتر از صد سالہ طاعت بے ریا
یاد او کن یاد او کن یاد او
خواجہ خواجگان
صلاح عالم السلام
غوث الاولیا
سلطان الاولیاء
سراج السالکین
حضرۃ الحاج
داعی کبیر
شہنشاہ ولایت
شاہ زمین و سرزمین
خسرو ملک تصوف
زبدۃ العارفین
زیر صدارت و سرپرستی
خواجہ محمد سلام خان لودھی
دامت برکاتہم العالیہ
خلیفہ مجاز دربار عالیہ موہڑی شریف
وزیب سجادہ آستانہ عالیہ نقشبندیہ سعیدیہ صابریہ
ثنا خوان رسالت مآب
قاری ثناء اللہ
ابن عثمان شاہ عطائی
فیض احمد سعدی
ابن سین
قاری خلد محمد
صادق رحمانی
حافظ کلیم
سوز محمد شیخ
حافظ عبدالرحمن
محمد زاہد حسین
حافظ عبدالرحمن
حافظ نعمان
حافظ ظفر
حافظ عثمان
حافظ ثاقب
اس عظیم الشان
سالانہ عرس پاک میں شرکت
فضیلت سے فیض قرآن
کے مدعو مسلمین و مومنین اور ملک
کے تمام علماء اکرام مشائخ عظام
فضلاء طلباء تعلیم تربیت فرمائیں گے
اصلاحات اسلامی کی زیارت
کلمات و طیبات پر مشتمل
کرایئے نذر فضل خدا
الحاج اللہ علیک بارگاہ الٰہی میں اس اجتماع کے لئے پیش کیا جائے
مرکزی آستانہ عالیہ نقشبندیہ سعیدیہ صابریہ
F-214/1-A
ماہنامہ کوثر زمزم کراچی
ابوبکر چشتی
طارق شفیع صابری
ساجد حامد علی ایڈووکیٹ
فضل کردار
انشاء اللہ العزیز

13–15.





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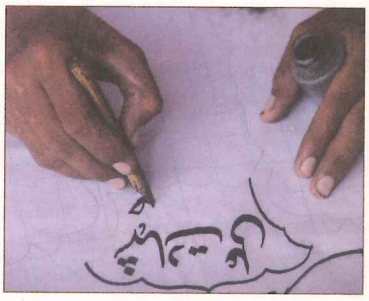
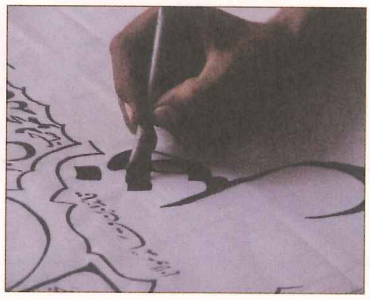
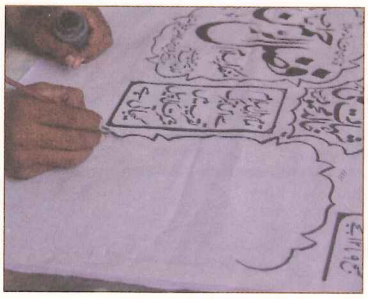
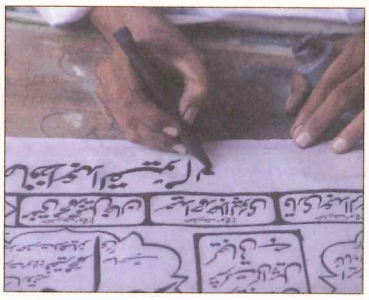


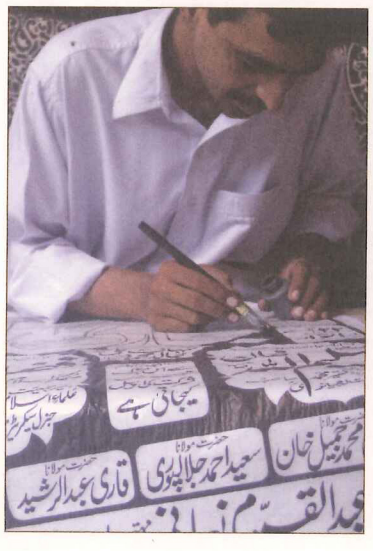


19–21.





22–24.



SOHAIL ZUBERI

Figures 13–24. Photographs documenting various stages of completion of the poster for 'Khatam-e Qur'an and Bukhari Sharif' 'The study of the Qur'an-o traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) by Bukhari Sharif'.

Design and calligraphy by Muhammad Ali at the *Kashana-e Kitabat*.

Figure 25. (Below) The final colour-printed version of the poster pasted on a wall in Karachi, 2007.

Kashana-e Kitabat ABODE OF CALLIGRAPHY

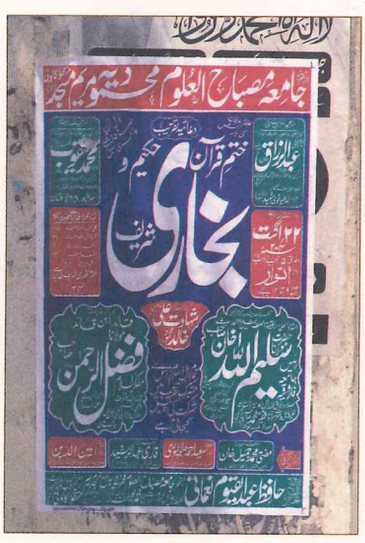
Kashana-e Kitabat is a small shop located in the centre of the city of Karachi on M.A. Jinnah Road, and was established by Muhammad Anwar in 1985. It specializes in designing posters, flyers, books, degrees, certificates, and brochures for religious organizations and madrasahs.

The posters are designed by Muhammad Anwar and the three employees who he has trained. The calligraphers are responsible for completing the design single-handedly, in contrast to the ateliers of the past where the specialists had well-defined tasks like setting the margins, layouts, calligraphy etc.

After the client has provided the text and verbally conveyed the design brief—including the parts needing emphasis e.g. the event, chief guest, host institution, location etc.—the process begins *(Figures 13–25)*. With the help of a graph paper the space is divided for the heading, subheading and other text which is first written in graphite *(Figures 13–15)*. Once the layout is prepared, a tracing paper which provides an ideal surface for calligraphy, is pasted over the graph paper. The underlying graph paper helps the calligrapher align the text and write in a straight line *(Figure 16)*.

The calligrapher starts from the top right, moving from right to left and makes his way down the paper using black India ink (diluted with a few drops of water) and an assortment of pens. Prepared by the calligraphers themselves, the reed and broad-tipped metal pens are used for medium to large texts and thick borders and rules *(Figures 17–20)*, while imported metallic nibs are used for smaller text size and fine lines or outlines for reversed text *(Figure 21)*. Once all available space is filled with writing *(Figure 23)*, the background is inked in black and the artwork is ready for offset printing *(Figures 21, 22&24)*. A poster is completed in one day and the design charges vary from Rs 300 to 500 per poster. *Figure 25* shows the poster printed in colour and pasted on a wall.

25.



According to Muhammad Ali *(Figure 22)*, senior designer and calligrapher working at the *Kashana-e Kitabat* since 1992, between 90 to 95 per cent of all the *Ijtimaa'* posters pasted on the walls of Karachi come from his pen! He also claims to have the distinction of making the largest religious poster in Pakistan—a four-piece 102x152 cm poster in black *(Figure 3)*, requested by the *Anjuman-e Moin-ul Aza* to commemorate *Ashura* (10 *Muharram*), mourning the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS) at the Battle of Karbala.

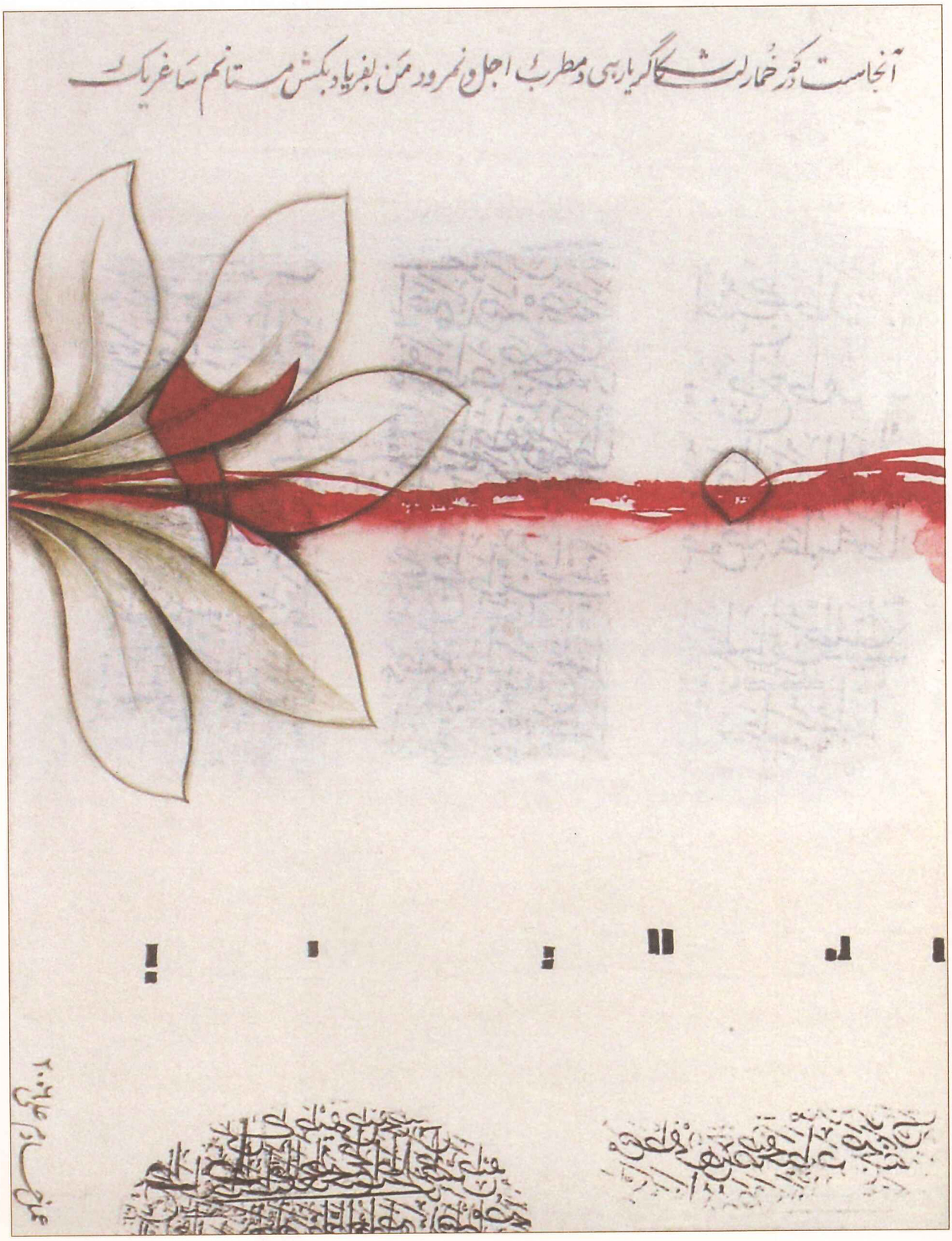
SOHAIL ZUBERI

26.

Figure 26. Urs Mubarak and Langar Aam 'Death Anniversary and free meal'

The main title with the legend 'Hazrat Allama Zahoor-ul Hassan Dars' is written largest in reverse on the central blue diagonal band. Composed directly above, also at an angle, is written Langar Aam *'free meal for the public'. Urs or death anniversary is placed within the green circle (top right) right. In the green triangle (bottom right) the time and place of the event are stated: Sunday, 5 December 2004 at 3 p.m. at a madrasah near Kutchi Memon Mosque, Saddar, Karachi. Another attraction, in the green diamond shape is the participation of various religious scholars and personalities famous for reciting the* naat *in honour of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). At the bottom in horizontal is the name of the organizer. The poster is frequently glued in multiples, for impact as well as to extend the life of the poster, imparting an impression similar to wallpaper.*

1.


آنجاست دگر خمار لشکر یارهی و مطرب اجل و نمرود من بفریاد بکش مستانم ساغر یک

HEROES AND ZEROES

DURRE S. AHMED

For the Jungian psychologist, the psyche is both personal and collective, including the archetypes of 'ego' and 'shadow'. If the former stands for reason and willpower, the latter provides a balance consisting of our dark side, of inferior, uncivilized, almost animal-like traits. At the collective level, as in the individual personality, ego and shadow are inseparable.

The ego is closely linked to the archetype of the Hero.[1] It is a universal *mytheme* about a young male in search of an elusive treasure, and the trials and battles he endures in the quest for victory after which he is acknowledged as the Ruler and Law Giver. However, either because of hubris (arrogance) or the fact of mortality, he ultimately suffers a 'fall' and dies. The Heroic Quest represents the emergence of the psychological faculties of will-power and reason, and the transition from adolescence to responsible adulthood. But, according to Jung, the Western manifestation of this motif indicates a fixation with power and violence and a refusal to move towards a more mature and complex sense of identity. Instead of seeing the Quest as a rite of passage and a symbol of a process eventually leading to wisdom, of becoming homo-sapien ('man of wisdom'); the adolescent hero's quest becomes an end in itself culminating in brute assertion of power as sanctioned by a virulent and narrow idea of reason (techno-science). The hero myth and its predisposition to violence is at the heart of the feminist critique of western culture being misogynist and excessively violent. The Heroic ego denigrates more 'feminine' values such as love and compassion. It prefers the literal and concrete, action over contemplation and cannot cope with ambiguity, the metaphorical and symbolic.

THE HEROIC EGO

In contrast to the ego, the shadow frequently remains unconscious since it is socially unacceptable. The more unconscious it is, the greater the tendency for the Heroic ego to become inflated, making the individual or group believe that he/they are god-like, all good and powerful. The (unconscious) shadow is then projected onto others, identifying them as inferior and evil. At an international level, the current impasse between the

Figure 1. (Left) UNTITLED
Khadim Ali
Gouache on vasli, 2006.
Size: Enlarged from the original 17x21 cm

**Painting not mentioned in text.*

West and Islamism can be seen as a mutual projection of their collective shadow(s). Since the West has a long history of internal critique, Jung being just one example, it is best to take a look at one's own (Islamic) shadow; not only as it mirrors the West's trigger-happy, macho ethos, but also for what it is saying about the state of masculinity in Pakistan as exemplified by an increasing number of young males enthralled by religion.

This is not about male bashing. As an illustration of archetype and counter-archetype, take the example of the barely clothed or naked female. It is an image that is endlessly encountered by the Western/global gaze, particularly via the media. But its counterveil (so to speak)—the *hijab*—is also increasingly visible. Here, I am not discussing the individual as stereotype but the Jungian idea that the psyche's collective dimensions can be inferred from the prevalence of certain images and ideas which, unlike stereotypes, carry a certain emotional 'charge'. Topics such as religion and the 'place' of women elicit intense views and feelings for or against. But I am digressing into the domain of the Archetypal Feminine which is a different story waiting to be told. This one is about what happens in its absence: when the Feminine is banished, obliterated, suppressed and marginalized in psychological and theological consciousness. That is, when the archetypes of Love (Eros), relatedness, and the 'softer' theological ideals of Compassion and Beauty, to name a few, recede in the individual and collective psyche. What prevails in such a lopsided psycho-cultural universe is a grim, undiluted hypermasculinity as exemplified in the archetype of the conquering Hero.

THE HERO'S SHADOW

In Pakistan, the archetype of the Hero's Shadow is evident not only in the relative invisibility of women but more so in the demographics of a steadily increasing population of young males, brought about principally by presence of technologies that either increase the chances of bearing sons or facilitate gender diagnosis and abortion of a female foetus.[i] Even in the best of circumstances, young males are more responsive to the physical and external, inherently passionate and volatile, raging hormones and all. Between pervasive poverty and inadequate systems which could channel this volatility (school/university, sports, etc), huge numbers of testosterone-driven males are finding refuge in an idea of religion in which weapons become an erotic substitute for a need which, it seems, can only be fulfilled in the Hereafter, preferably with a *houri*. The fusion of unacknowledged sexual energy and violence leads to a condition which western feminists call phallocentricism, a polite term for what in our self-destructive context can be referred to as *ewrecktionism*. In an atmosphere of cultural nihilism and the suppression of anything close to the idea of pleasure, fun and laughter, *ewrecktionist* terrorism prevails, not only in the periodic bloodbaths of sectarian politics but at all levels of life. It ranges from decreeing as 'un-Islamic' events such as kite-flying festivals, which are ancient rites of spring—a symbol of renewed (Feminine) fecundity; to aggressive attempts at suppression of more modern ritual events like the New Year celebrations. One can note a compulsive preoccupation with bodily taboos along with similar paranoid obsessions around women's bodies—the idea of 'honour' and what a woman can or cannot do as sanctioned on the grounds that 'it is our culture/religion'.

i. Since 1980, male–female ratios have been 1.08 and the gap is increasing.

In their zeal to ensure that all become, not so much good, but 'correct' Muslims, even home is no longer safe. Just when some are seeking an altered state of consciousness through quiet contemplation, or others attempt to escape into (chemically induced) oblivion; the ear is assaulted by a terror that is relentless in its regularity: the sound of mega-amplified, screeching, prepubescent voices of young males masquerading as *muezzins*. Once considered an art form that took years to cultivate, today one simply recoils at 'the call' as made from the ubiquitous mosque.

As a whole, the senses are assaulted by an aesthetic and sensory terrorism, for example, in the polluted, decaying, filth-filled cities. This garbage is then presented in different ways as 'art' by those who think it is somehow postmodern and profound to confront a viewer with what may not be so visible in the West, but is self-evident and literally present on a large scale in Pakistan (garbage). But this is not the place to discuss the psycho-cultural pathologies of 'high' liberal fundamentalism in Pakistan which requires a full-fledged analysis on its own, particularly regarding its masochistic tendencies *vis-à-vis* the feminine and creative imagination. Either way, the state of the Pakistani psyche—secular or Islamist—seems to be in deep distress if not outright depression with very little by way of comic relief. No wonder, a recent worldwide survey of happiness refers to 'troubled Pakistan' being 'near the bottom at 4.3' on a happiness scale of one to ten.[2]

THE BOTTOM LINE

We all know of certain unmentionable aspects of the madrasah culture. The prevalence of paedophilia among those men who have adopted religion as a profession in Pakistan is not unlike its occurrence in the Catholic Church in Europe and the United States. In a way, both point to a similar psychological malaise of an exclusivist hypermasculinism. However, differing injunctions about religious celibacy, but especially his inherent paranoia, impel the mass Islamist to demonstrate his 'masculinity' *vis-à-vis* women in the most macho ways, verging on the grotesque. Beyond the obvious socially negative attitudes towards women, extreme individual pathology becomes symptomatic of a collective, misogynist, paranoid, religiously rooted, psychosexual syndrome. Outside of the religious world, one of the ugliest episodes in the history of the nation had to do with the alleged murder of more than a hundred adolescent boys by a pederast.[3] Secular or religious, the brutalizing and obliteration of the feminine is all pervasive.

VIAGRA AND OTHER MAGIC BULLETS

A collective crisis of masculinity, religion, sexuality and love is evident in the nature of advertising directed at the masses. A psychocultural reading of these texts indicates that they are primarily addressed to males. Basically brief, widely prevalent slogans and messages in Urdu and other regional languages, they are written on rocks, walls and different publicly visible structures. The scale and frequency is impossible to ignore from roads and thoroughfares. In the last two decades, these advertisements are increasingly around three themes reflecting the mix of concerns dominating mass (male) Pakistani-Muslim consciousness.

At least till 9/11, and even now in North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), the most frequent advertisement is the call to jihad, urging 'men' to join one of the numerous fundamentalist organizations that have proliferated in the country *(Figure 2)*. Jihad is primarily an inner, and therefore psychological/symbolic concept, the prerequisite being a subjectivity that is aware of its inner diversity: positive and negative, feminine and masculine. The inward, subjective primacy of jihad is self-evident in the Prophet's (PBUH) referring to this as the 'greater jihad' or *jihad-i akbar*. In contrast, the external, literal form is seen as 'lesser' or *jihad-i asghar*. But given factors ranging from cultural erosion to state-sponsored religiosity, jihad has been totally externalized in the service of a persecutory paranoia that is focused on single-mindedly routing out all perceived 'enemies of Islam' everywhere.

The second type of advertisement, and of equal scale and frequency as the call to jihad concerns all manner of quick and sure cures for what is euphemistically termed 'male weakness', that is, impotence *(Figures 3–10)*. The invisible global underbelly of masculinist machismo as evident in the current militaristic mood of the West and militant Islamism, can be glimpsed in the sales of Viagra which in 1998 become the fastest selling drug in history. In 2003, revenues for the market of erectile dysfunction (ED) drugs was $2.12 billion and will be more than triple by 2009.[4] While precise figures for the Pakistan market are not available, interviews with CEOs of pharmaceutical companies suggest that there is stiff competition from the informal sector and which is borne out by the nationwide presence of the popular marketing of sundry aphrodisiacs for 'male weakness'.

Between the popularity of these cures and the modern Viagra, lies the phallic symbol of a (inter)nationally flaccid phallogocentricism. Islam and the West, ego and shadow come together in the billboard(s): *Make a Zero into a Hero: Tremendous Masculine Strength (Figures 5&6)*. Since the Feminine is denied, fulfilment remains elusive. Yet the need remains. But only as experienced and expressed literally, as in adolescence, mainly through the genitals. The archetype of love and relatedness, Eros, remains unmoved. Artificially propped up, so to speak, it is expressed in a sexual rage against women's bodies or the despair of a particular sort of depersonalized homosexuality, both experienced and conducted as compulsions. Beneath the self-glorifying, self-gratification of 'handling' all types of guns and weapons, these advertisements for old (and new) Viagra provide a fearful, yet poignant subtext, to the strident calls for jihad.

The state of both spirituality and sexuality are encapsulated by a series of three advertisements on a wall *(Figure 6)*. The middle one offers the

Figure 2. Jihad aap par farz hai
'Jihad is obligatory on you' written on rocks on the side of a street, Swat, North-West Frontier Province, 2000.

Figures 3–5. Advertisements on walls in Karachi for providing services and cures for male impotency. English translations are given below:

Figure 3. Royal Clinic—Expert in special and 'hidden ailments'. The address and telephone number of the provider are visible.

Figure 4. Another message from the same clinic 'Expert in complicated and hidden maladies'.

Figure 5. 'To convert a zero into a hero' promoting the use of 'Dynamic Gold for massive strength, available at every drugstore'.

**Advertisements depicted in Figures 3–5 are details of wall chalkings in Figure 6.*

2.

جہاد آپ
پر فرض ہے

3.

2781565
رائل کلینک
پوشیدہ
امراض کے
ماہر معالج خصوصی
بالمقابل بوہری جماعت خانہ صدر

4.

پیچیدہ و پوشیدہ
امراض کے ماہر
رائل

5.

6
بے پناہ
طاقت
کیلئے
ڈائنامک طلاء
زیرو کو بنائے
ہیرو
ہر میڈیکل اسٹور پر دستیاب

'spiritual' service of *istikhara* (a special prayer for guidance when difficult decisions are required). This is framed on one side by a promotion for *Dynamic Gold* promising to make a (male) *zero into a hero*. On the other side, a text promotes the *Royal Clinic* and its specialists dealing with 'hidden ailments', namely impotence and haemorrhoids. The numerical frequency of advertisements for curing these two conditions encompass the spectrum of the masculine malaise in Pakistan. To put it bluntly, either there is the inability to do what comes effortlessly to the birds and bees, or when the ability is there, it seems to be a case of getting the wrong end of the stick. This is the bottom line.

Interestingly, in spite of aversion to all things Western (except techno-weapons), when it comes to naming these centres of treatment, it is *French Laboratories*, *German Health/Clinics* and *Cheen (China) Health Clinic (Figures 7–9)*. Somehow, these are the most credible nations when it comes to alleviating 'hidden' ailments. Eat your heart out USA!

A third type of advertisement relates to the services of practitioners of healing through magic and other 'spiritual arts', promising especially, instant fulfilment in love and seduction. The appeal to absolute power and control is vividly summed up by the guaranteed goal of bringing the victim, the *beloved, at your feet within twenty-four hours (Figure 11)*. To the extent that the market for this promise of 'love' includes women, Eros is present, albeit minimally, and in an infantile 'magical' conception, typical to a situation of helplessness and disempowerment.

When occasionally, Eros/woman does surface in the masculine-dominated culture, it is in extremely crude, literal and brutal ways such as collectively, in the regional cinema and portrayals of women either in fully armed fury and/or, eventually, as extremely vulgar and obscene sex objects. Mostly, it tends to express itself not only in direct physical violence to women but also in terms of a peculiar and crude (homo)sexuality, which is perhaps inevitable in exclusivist male environments.

Given the emergent demographics of a growing and ever younger male population in Pakistan, the collective manifestation of the Hero's Shadow and its implications for Islam and women, does not bode well for the future. But we can all take comfort in the fact that international best-selling drugs, particularly for anxiety and depression (Prozac, Zoloft, Xanax, etc) are easily available over the counter to enable us to endure this relentlessly grim 'Land of the Pure'.

Incidentally, the only advertisements aimed specifically at women, pertain to different brands of pressure cookers. Therein lies another symbol of the present and future.

Figure 6. Wall chalking with three advertisements. (Left to right) Royal Clinic for impotency, the services of a spiritualist for divine guidance and a potency drug 'Dynamic Gold'.

Figures 7–11. Signage for health care facilities. Translated below:

Figure 7. 'Authentic Cheen (China) Health Clinic, with telephone number provided. Estd. 1948, Sexual Specialist'.

Figure 8. 'Masculine strength restored in 24 hours only—French (Pakistan) Laboratories'.

Figure 9. 'Consult for the successful treatment of illnesses. German Healthways drugstore. Registered Government of Pakistan. Specialising in modern and traditional medicine.'

Figure 10. The facade of the clinic of Hakim Muhammad Yasin Sahib Wasti declaring 100 per cent success in treating 'masculine weakness' with an astonishing, modern formula for infertility; encouraging an examination before or after marriage.

Figure 11. An advertisement which is usually hand distributed to passengers travelling by road in the cities. Translated, it states: 'Magic which performs like lightning. Addressed to men with unresolved issues such as, removing an obstacle to marriage, bringing the beloved at one's feet, eliminating constraint on proposals, childlessness, domestic issues, love marriage, business related problems, and for the solution to any other dilemma, you are invited to visit the 'Professor' who needs no introduction—breaking old spells and casting fresh ones. Visiting Hours: 10.00 a.m.–7.00 p.m. and on Sundays: 10.00 a.m.–3.00 p.m. The address and telephone number is provided'.

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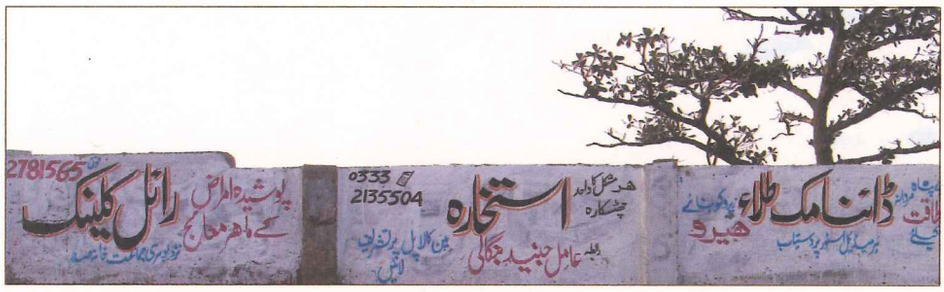
3. *The Herald*, Karachi. December 1999–January 2000.
4. http://www.epharmacenticalnews.com/Products/4/111/visiongain/The-World-Erectile-Dysfunction-Markets-20042009.html

6.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رائل کلینک
پوشیدہ امراض
کے ماہر معالج
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استخارہ
عامل جنید جمالی
ڈاٹنامک طلاء
ہیرو

7.

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اصلی
چین ہیلتھ کلینک
CHEEN HEALTH CLINIC
CLINIC
ESTD
1948
SEXUAL
SPECIALIST

8–9.

صرف 24 گھنٹہ میں
مردانہ طاقت بحال
فرنچ (پاکستان) لیبارٹریز

بیماریوں کے کامیاب علاج کیلئے رجوع کریں
دواخانہ
جرمن ہیلتھ ویز
رجسٹرڈ گورنمنٹ آف پاکستان
طب جدید و قدیم کے معالج خاص۔

10–11.

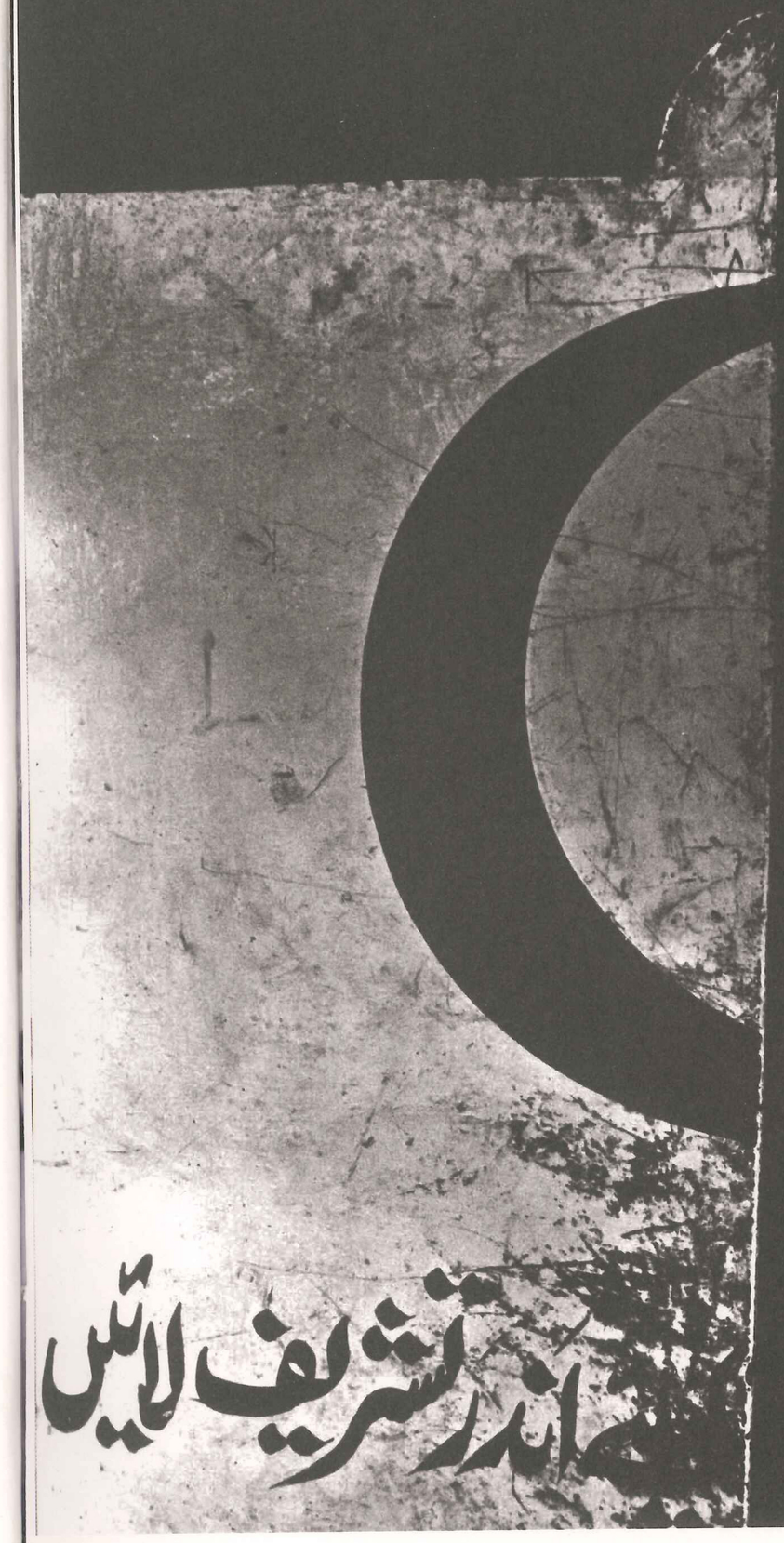
حکیم محمد یٰسین صاحب واسطی
طب جدید کا
مردانہ کمزوری
حیرت انگیز فارمولا

جادو چلے آسمانی بجلی کی طرح
وہ عامل حضرات جن کا کوئی نہ کوئی مسئلہ
کسی نہ کسی وجہ سے رک گیا ہے اور بار بار کوشش کے باوجود حل نہیں ہو رہا ہے
عامل حضرات اپنے رکے ہوئے مسئلے کیلئے تشریف لائیں مثلاً شادی میں رکاوٹ، من پسند محبوب آپ کے
قدموں میں، رشتوں کی بندش، اولاد کی بندش، گھریلو مسائل، من پسند شادی
کاروباری بندش اور ہر طرح کے مسئلے کے یقینی حل کیلئے تشریف لائیں
اوقات: صبح ۱۰ تا ۷ بجے شام اتوار ۱۰ تا ۳ بجے دن
جادو شکن
پروفیسر
رحمان بنگالی
دکان نمبر 6/89
کولمبس ٹاور کلفٹن تین تلوار
PSO پمپ کے ساتھ
فون 5215733
جو کسی بھی تعارف
کے محتاج نہیں

Calligraffiti

TYPOGRAPHY AND WALL CHALKINGS

ARIF MAHMOOD



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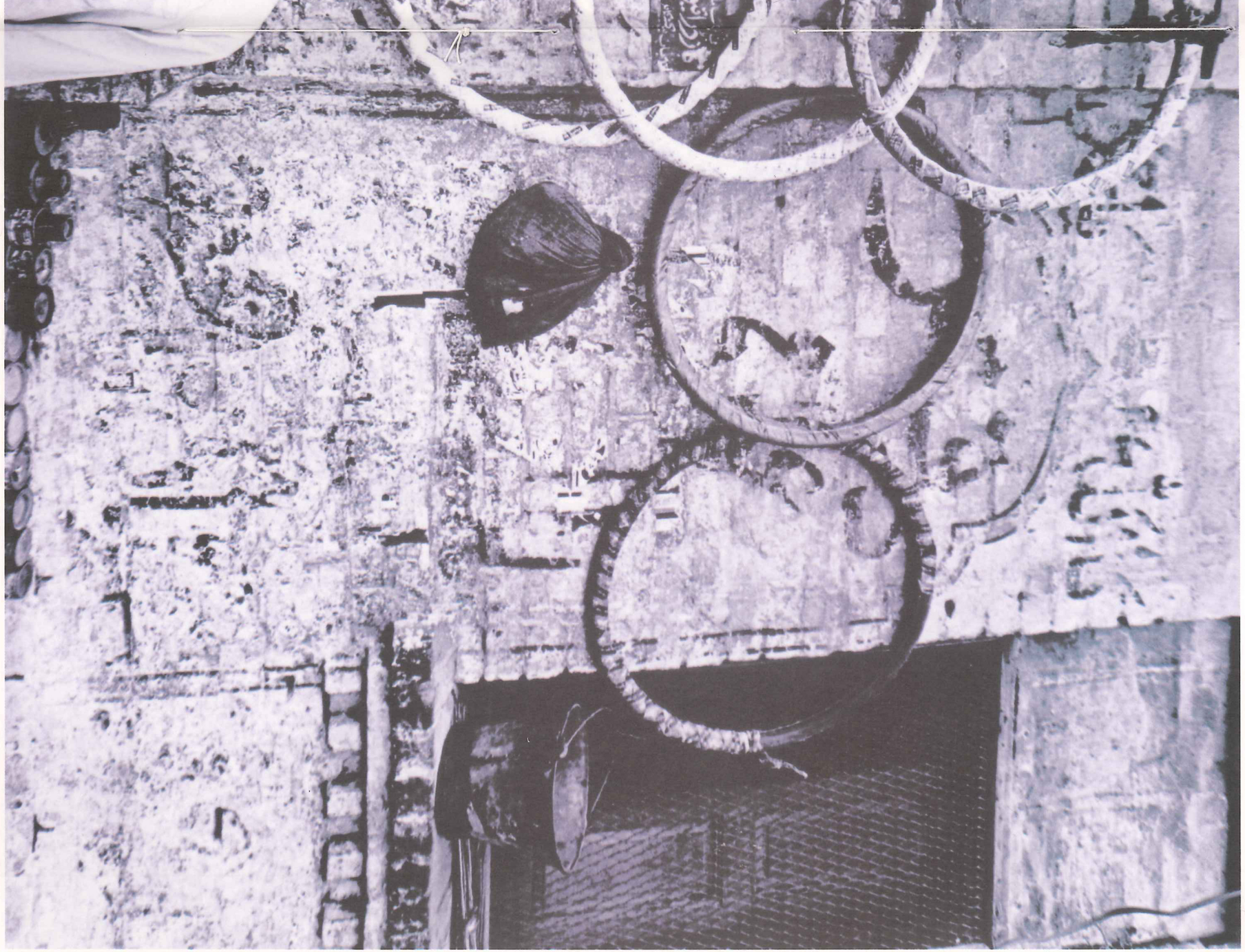

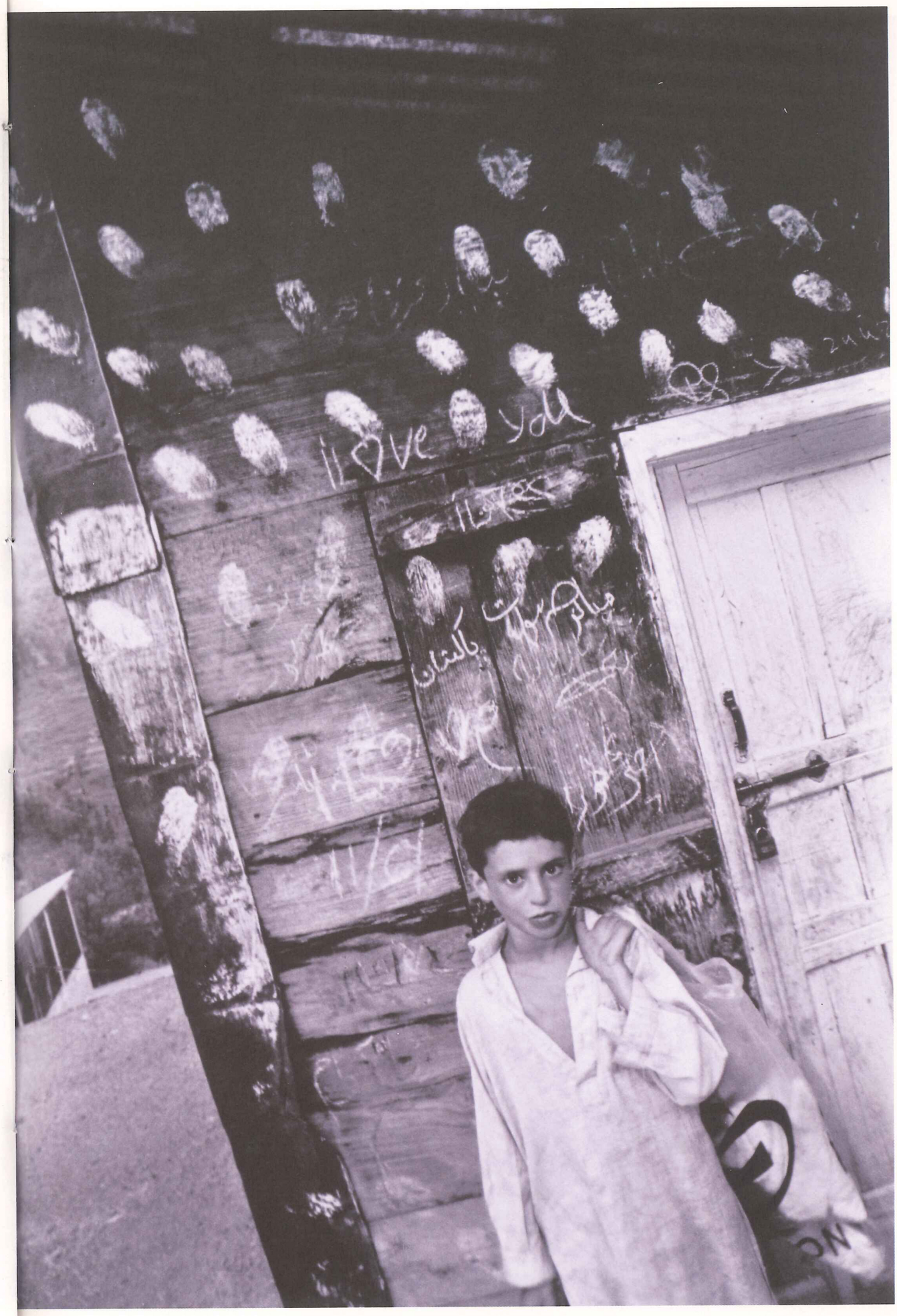
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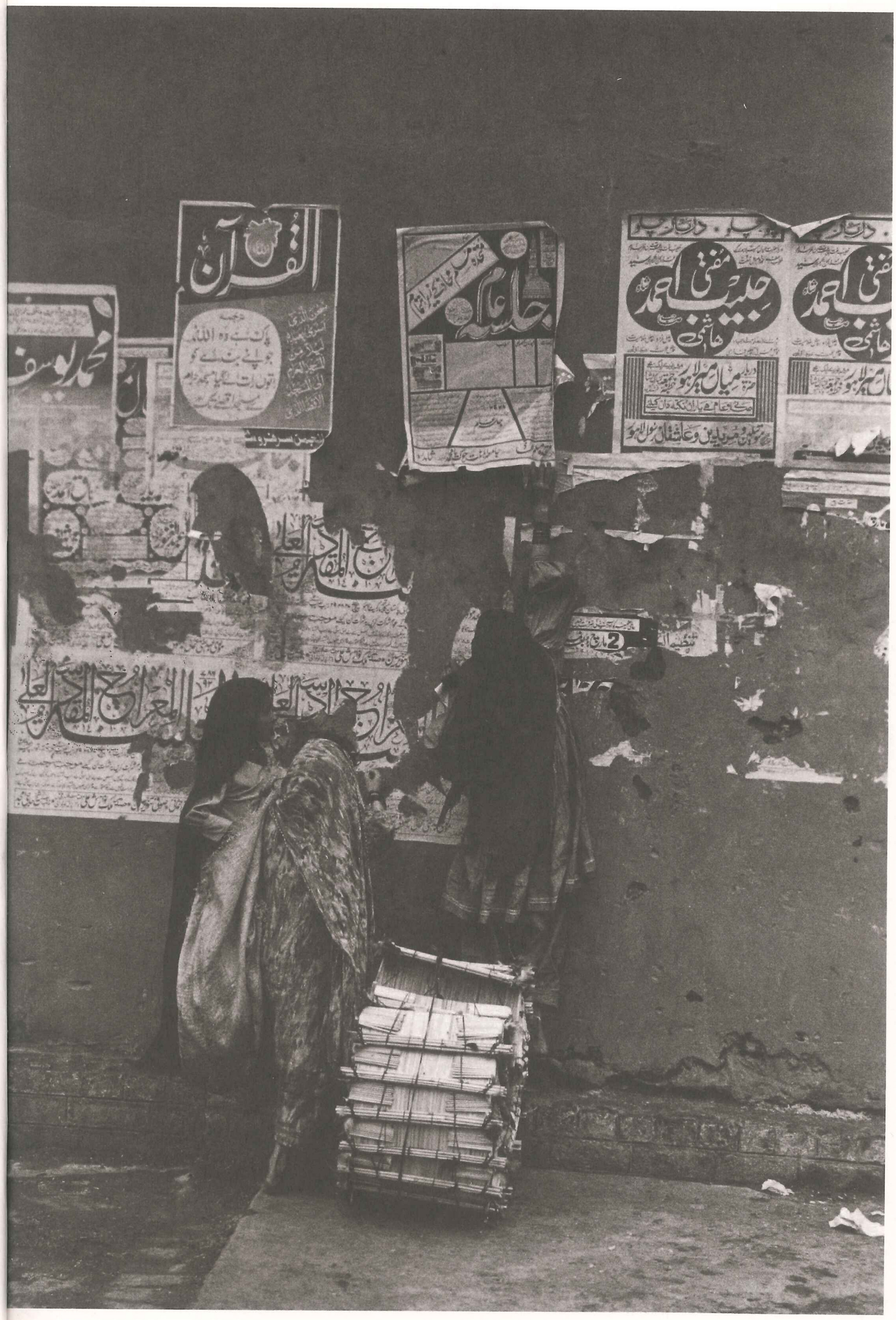
القرآن
محمد یوسف
جلسہ عام
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مفتی احمد
2 مارچ

ARIF MAHMOOD

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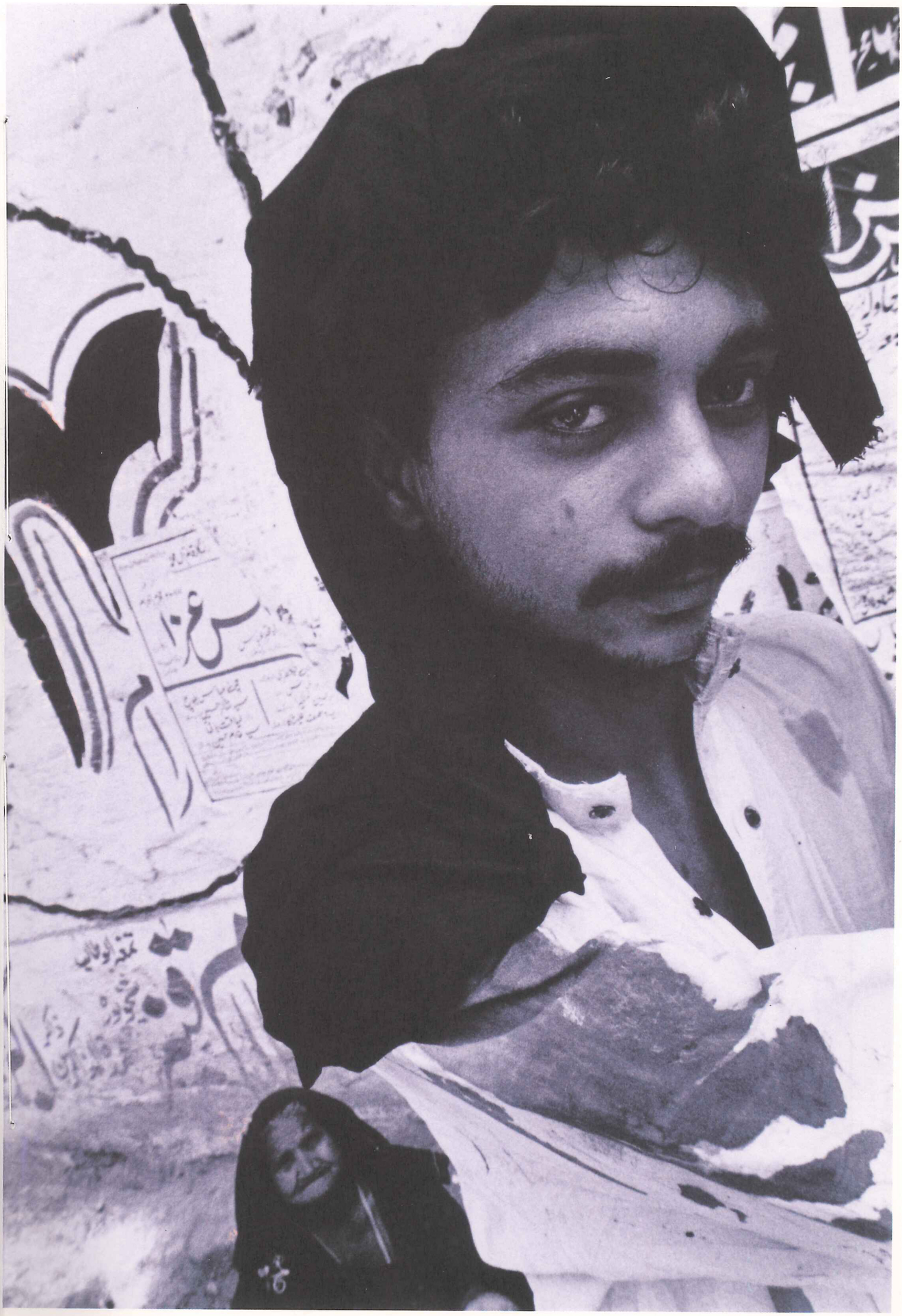


Calligraffiti captures the diversity of media and locations where writing as a form of decoration, information, protest or self-expression is visible in the public space.

Page 105. Ander tashreef laein
'Please come in' inscribed at the entrance to a fortune-teller's shop in Empress Market, Saddar, Karachi.

Pages 106–107. A small poster announcing Driving seekhiye (Learn driving) within one of several bicycle tyres hanging on a brick wall, near Data Darbar Shrine, Lahore.

Page 109. 'I Love You' and 'Pakistan' hand painted in white on the wooden exterior of a hut in Swat in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).

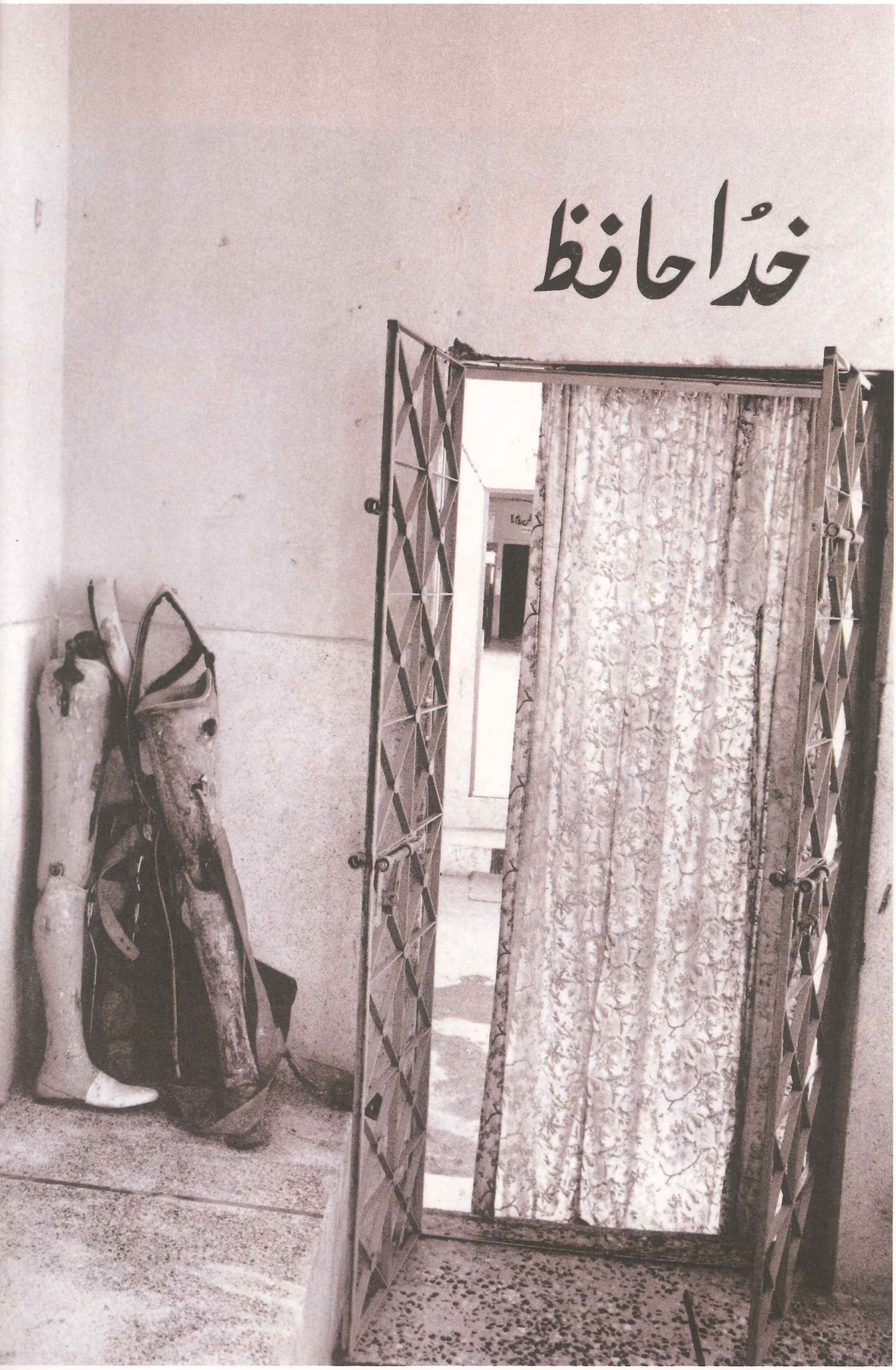
Page 111. An Ijtimaa' (congregation) poster on the wall of Data Darbar Shrine, Lahore. (See also pages 86–95).

Pages 112–113. A torn poster stating 'Airport chalo Benazir Bhutto ka tareekhi istaqbal' (Let's go to the airport to give Benazir Bhutto a historic welcome), Saddar, Karachi. (See also page 233)

Page 115. The entrance at Karbala Gamaeh Shah, Lahore.

Page 7. Dil Jalay (Smouldering Heart)
Clifton Beach, Karachi.

Page 8. Khuda Hafiz (May God Protect) painted over the exit at the Edhi Welfare Centre, National Highway, Karachi.


خدا حافظ

1.

NOT READING THE WRITING ON THE WALL
The Purpose of Qur'anic Calligraphy on Buildings

JAMAL J. ELIAS

It is something of a truism to claim that Muslims do not have icons, idols or pictures of major religious figures. There is undoubtedly a widespread cultural taboo in modern times, based on long-standing precedents, against depicting human religious figures as well as God in visual form.

By way of example (although I would never suggest that they represent any sort of Islamic ideal) the Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas, in March 2001, was religiously motivated to some degree, and religiously justified in every extent. After destroying the Buddhas (which had serenely stood there for a millennium of Muslim rule in Afghanistan), they sacrificed hundred cows to atone for the collective Muslim sin of not having destroyed these idols sooner. And, at the very same time as loud condemnations of this act of destruction issued forth from many corners of the Islamic world, prominent Pakistani religious figures applauded the destruction of the Buddhas.

Even the most cursory glance in the direction of Muslim attitudes towards religious images and objects makes one realize that there are layers of complexity to this issue. On the one hand, we have a widespread (though not comprehensive) taboo on religious depictions, and a narrower but still widespread distrust of treating material objects as divine or supernatural. On the other, we have a religion spatially focused around a place, a building (the Ka'aba), and in some ways more specifically focused around a stone built into one wall of that building.

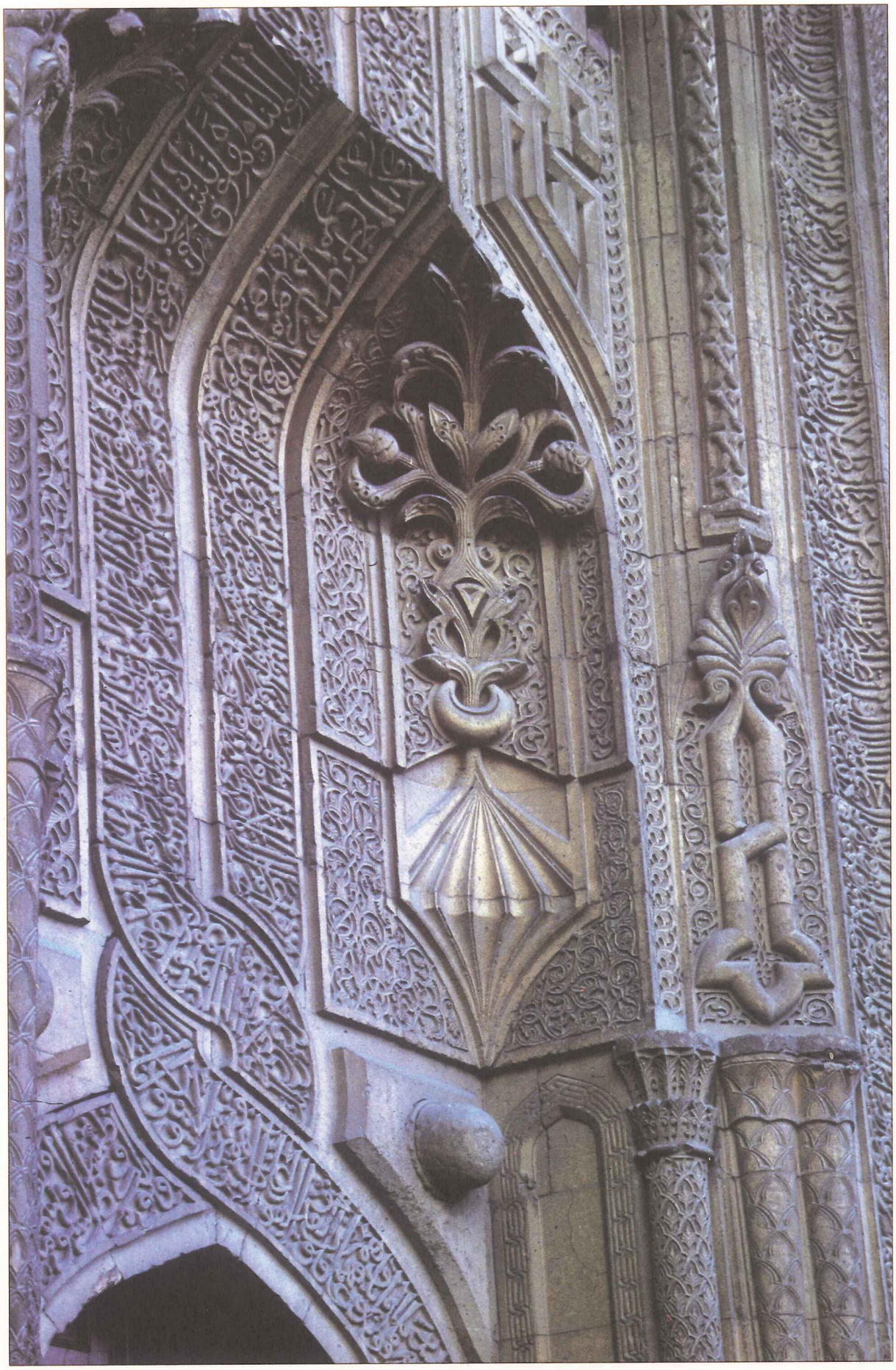
Clearly, Muslims have a complex relationship to physical objects and visual representation. It is my purpose here to explore this relationship through talking about the tradition of incorporating verses of the Qur'an in the decoration of religious buildings such as mosques and madrasahs (*Figures 1–5*).

Figure 1. Shah Jahan Mosque in Thatta, Sindh. Built by the Mughal emperor between 1644 and 1647 CE. Detail depicting verses from the Qur'an carved in yellow stone in Nastaliq on the arches facing the central courtyard.

CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy is arguably the most distinctive art form developed in Islamic civilization. Indeed, one might argue that Muslims chose to develop the art of writing

2.



to the almost complete exclusion of many other fine arts, particularly figural painting and sculpture. In addition, unlike most fine arts, calligraphy has often been an extremely public art form since it has been used to decorate religious and secular buildings through the entire Islamic world.

Writing on buildings, or monumental epigraphy, raises a very interesting set of questions in the study of perception in an Islamic environment. One can argue that the primary audience for writing on the insides of private buildings would be well-to-do, presumably educated individuals who commissioned the work or were guests or family members of the person who commissioned them. As such, perhaps writing on the insides of buildings can be thought of in the same way as one thinks about images in books—miniature paintings, for example, which were undoubtedly intended for and circulated among very select audiences.

The writing, however, on the outside of religious buildings must be viewed differently, since it would be unavoidable that the majority of the people who saw this writing would be unable to read it. Even if one argued that a substantial percentage of viewers in major urban centres of the Arab world (such as Cairo or Damascus) in medieval times would have had some level of literacy through which they would be able to make out what verses of the Qur'an were on a mosque or a madrasah, such an argument could never be made about the South Asian subcontinent (or Anatolia, Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau or any number of other places) where the majority of the population was, for some centuries, non-Muslim, and the Muslim population itself had almost no knowledge of Arabic.

Under these circumstances, one wonders what importance the builders gave to the impact their epigraphy would have on this audience. Even if the general populace was only a tertiary audience for the writing on the outside of buildings, there can be little doubt that the visual impact of the writing was of some concern to the builders. Undoubtedly, they considered other audiences and purposes of such ornamentation than the pleasure of their patrons, since writing frequently appears high up on buildings (on minarets for example), where it could never be read easily from the ground.

Figure 2. (Left) Detail of the portal of Ince Minare Medresse, a theological seminary in Konya, Turkey. Built by Vizier Sahip Ata Fahrettin Ali in 1258 CE, the ornamented calligraphy is among the finest examples of Anatolian Seljuk architecture; it now houses the Seljuk Arts Museum.

QUR'ANIC VERSES AND THEIR PLACEMENT

The hypothesis that the writing was frequently not meant to be read (in the literal sense of the word) is

supported by the obvious fact that sometimes the calligraphy is too ornate to be readable, certainly by someone with a rudimentary knowledge of the script and no formal training in calligraphic styles. It is also supported by the observation that frequently the Qur'anic verses that appear on buildings are unrelated to the context of their appearance, and seem to have been chosen not for what they say but for whether or not they fit the space where they will be placed. This only applies to the Qur'an—not to poetry appearing on buildings, nor to dedication plaques or other such pieces of writing that could be viewed as informative in a mundane sense.

It is noteworthy that only a limited number of verses from the Qur'an seem to form the pool from which architects and calligraphers selected what they would use to decorate mosques. By far the commonest verse from the Qur'an to appear on mosques, where it is normally placed over doorways, is *Surah-e Tawbah* (Chapter 9, verse 18):

Only he who believes in Allah and the hereafter, performs the prayers, gives the alms and fears no one but Allah, shall visit Allah's mosques. Those shall be reckoned among the rightly guided.

The second-most popular verse—which appears with a quarter of the frequency of the one translated above—is the famous *Ayat ul-Kursi* (Chapter 2, verse 256) describing some primary divine qualities believed in by most Muslims. There are only three other verses that appear with noteworthy regularity. *Surah-e Jinn* (Chapter 72, verse 18) frequently appears on doorways:

Indeed, mosques are Allah's, so do not call, besides Allah, upon anyone else.

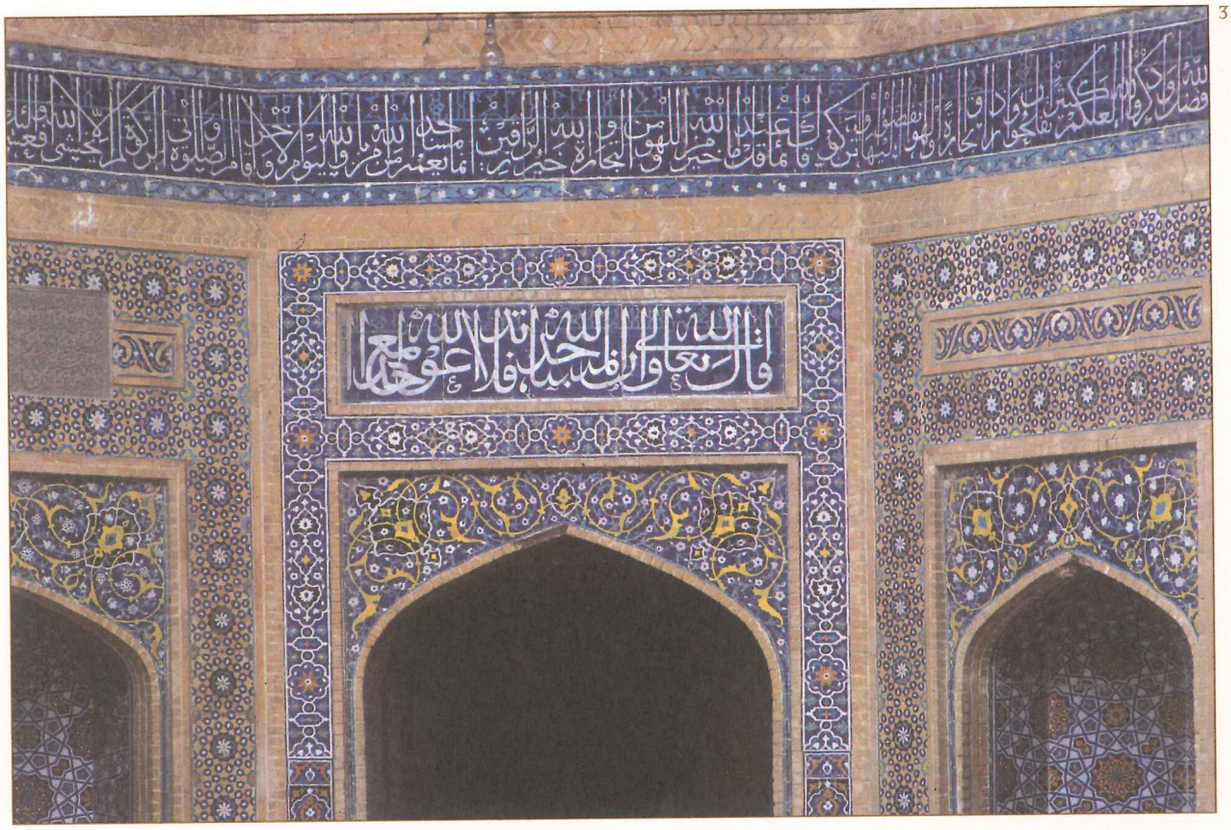
Verse 35 of *Surah-e Nur* (Chapter 24) sometimes appears above or around the *mihrab*, the niche in the front wall of the mosque that marks the direction of prayer. This very famous and extremely eloquent verse compares God to light emanating from a lamp placed in a niche. The last verse worth noting is the beginning of *Surah-e Isra*, which refers to the Prophet's (PBUH) *Mi'raj*, or spiritual journey to heaven. It has been especially popular in South Asia and Iran.

On the basis of studying Qur'anic verses and their placement on a building one can divide them into two categories: those that are contextually relevant and those that are contextually appropriate. By contextually relevant I am referring to selections from the Qur'an that refer in some direct and obvious way to the architectural feature with which they are associated. Chapter 9, verse 18 is an example of this, in that it is normally written over a doorway and refers to entering mosques. The same is true for the Light Verse and its placement near the *mihrab* of a mosque which is often decorated with lights, candles or lamps.

It is worth noting, however, that the *mihrab* and its decoration refer to the interior, not the exterior, of a mosque in most cases. A notable exception to this is the *Musallah-e Nizamiya* in Pakpattan. A *musallah* is a place to pray, less formal and imposing than a mosque, and one that is often associated with the tombs of important religious figures. The *Musallah-e Nizamiya*, so named because it is supposed to mark the place where Sheikh Nizam uddin Auliya—the famous Chishti saint and disciple of Baba Farid—used to pray, is one of the two oldest examples of such a *musallah* in South Asia.

Figure 3. (Right) The fresco on the facade of the Kalyan Masjid in Bukhoro, Uzbekistan.

Figure 4. (Right) A dedication plaque in Persian at the Shah Jahan Mosque. These verses are distinguished from those of the Qur'an by the absence of meticulous diacritical marks which ensure the correct pronunciation and meaning of the words in Arabic.



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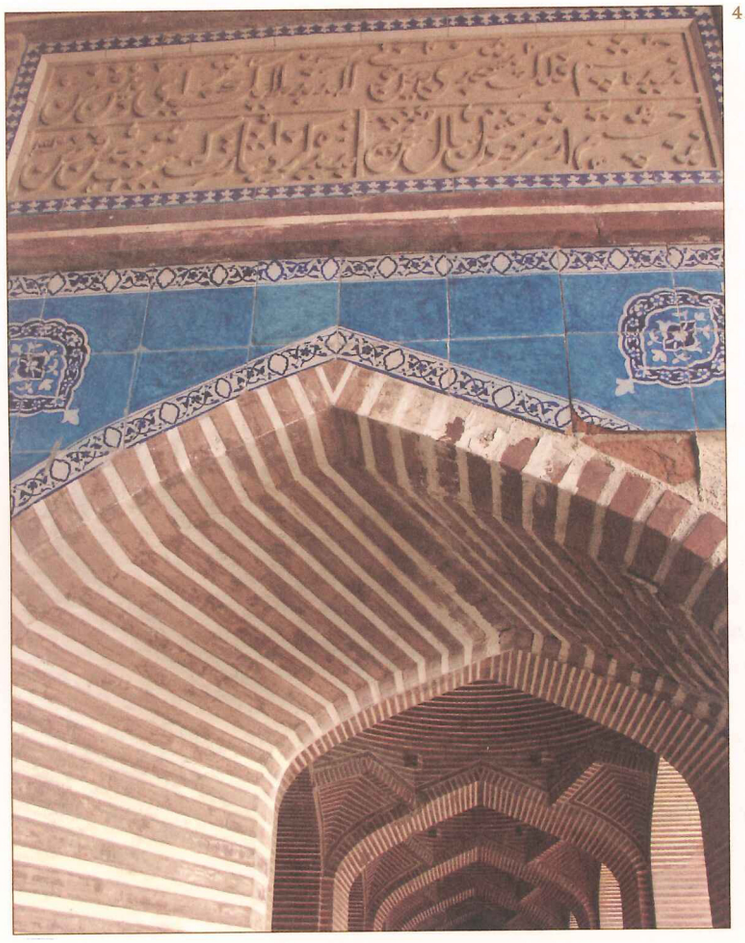

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Though it is now enclosed in a room built as part of renovations conducted in the twentieth century, the *Musallah-e Nizamiya* stood for several centuries as an outdoor *mihrab*. The niche portion of the *Musallah-e Nizamiya* is framed by the *Ayat ul-Kursi* written in a very readable script. Within the niche is part of verse 37 of *Surah-e Al-e Imran* (Chapter 3):

Whenever Zachariah went to see her in the sanctuary (mihrab), he found that she had some provision. 'Maryam,' he asked, 'where did you get this?' She replied: 'It is from Allah, and Allah provides for whom He wishes without measure'.

The *Ayat ul-Kursi* is an example of a contextually appropriate verse, in that explicit references to God's unity and omnipotence—qualities central to Muslim concepts of the divine—are appropriate subjects to be placed anywhere on a religious building. But what of the other verse, which has no obvious connection to its location other than the occurrence of the word *mihrab* in it? It could have been selected for this seemingly trivial reason, or perhaps because references to God providing for Maryam could be taken as the model for Nizam uddin Auliya and other Sufis' complete reliance on God. But this represents an interpretive stretch, one that would be very difficult to make for the overwhelming majority of examples of Qur'anic monumental epigraphy. One cannot make such a claim of content-based contextual propriety for most verses since they do not have even tangential relevance to their placement, nor for ones placed so high as to be unreadable, nor those written in calligraphic styles so ornate as to be illegible to the untrained eye (what to speak of the illiterate one).

QUR'ANIC EPIGRAPHY AS SIGNIFIER

So why would the Qur'an be cut and pasted without context, and written in ways that were unreadable? The most obvious answer is that what the words said was not important, but rather, that they were from the Qur'an was important. Walking past a building such as the mosque of Shah Jahan in Thatta, what the average seventeenth century citizen of Sindh would see would be the Qur'an. They would not read it for content, but would see it as some sort of marker defining the space as religious and, perhaps, as grand. In all likelihood, they would assume that all writing on the building was Qur'anic. This is reminiscent of how many people in Pakistan (and other non-Arabic speaking Muslim countries) assume that all writing in the Arabic language on scraps of paper is Qur'an and treat the scraps with veneration.

What adds a much more intriguing dimension to the question of what, cognitively speaking, Qur'anic calligraphy on the walls of a building would represent to one who cannot read the words, is the status of the Qur'an in Muslim theological understanding. One of the most sustained and vital debates in the formulation of Islamic theology in the ninth and tenth centuries was the question of the nature of the Qur'an. Without going into the details of this heated dispute (it involved issues of caliphal sponsorship, purges and persecution of opponents, etc.), the end result was that, in the eyes of the majority of Muslims, the Qur'an (in its capacity as divine speech) was seen as inseparable from God's nature. It was also resolved that each written example of the Qur'an is created (versus uncreated, that is, divine) in the physical materiality of

its writing, but uncreated in its content. Therefore the Qur'an written on the wall of a mosque or madrasah would be created in that the stone is created, but it is uncreated in that it is Qur'anic speech. And since Qur'anic speech is inseparable from God, the writing on the wall—as a representation of God's speech—is necessarily a representation of God. And inasmuch as writing is visual, Qur'anic calligraphy is a visual representation of God.

Of course, the average Muslim would be unlikely to consciously understand such calligraphy to be a visual representation of God, nor is it likely that the builders or patrons of the buildings saw monumental epigraphy as such. It is far more likely that the use of verses from the Qur'an to decorate buildings served (and continues to serve) multivalent purposes of marking the building and signifying various ways in which society understood the relationship of God to the world. In the first place, Qur'anic calligraphy probably functions in some talismanic way to mark the building and protect it and the people associated with it. But in a wider sense it represents divine presence in the world and signifies the dedication of the patron, the builder, the building and the wider audience—in other words, of the society at large—to faith in and dedication to God. This raises some intriguing questions on the nature of likeness and similitude, on representation, and on what God's speech being inseparable from Him means to Muslims in a philosophical sense, but I cannot go into such a discussion here. Suffice it to say that the non-representational religious art of Muslims is not as non-representational as one first understands it to be.

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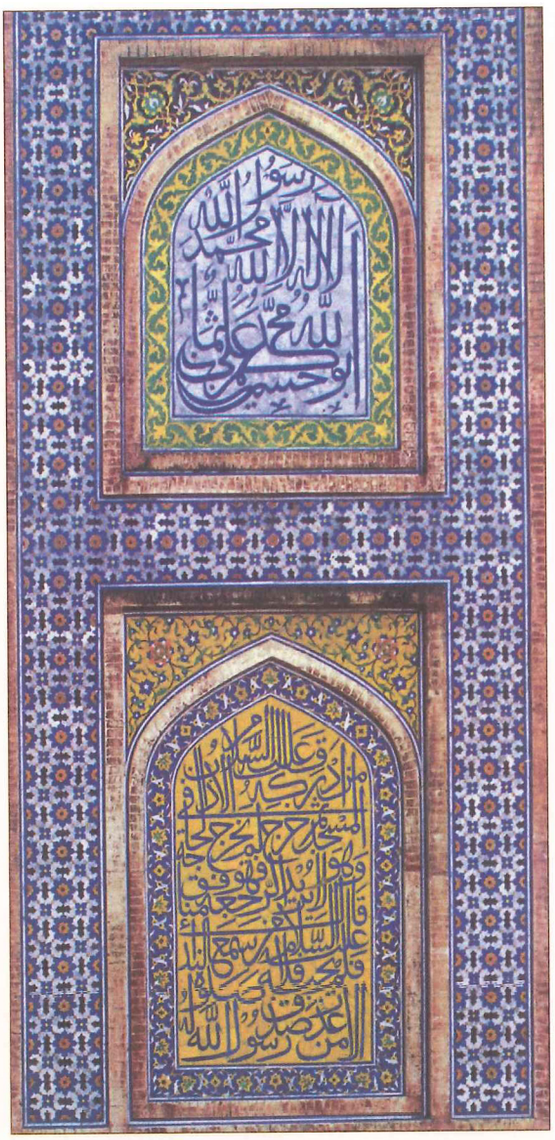

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Figure 5. A column of the Wazir Khan Mosque built in 1634 CE during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan in Lahore, Punjab.

Figure 6. (Right) Calligraphy from the Qur'an Surah 24: Al-Nur 'The Light' Section 5: 36. Rendered by calligrapher Taj Qamar (courtesy Syed Ejaz Munawar Ali)

Translation:

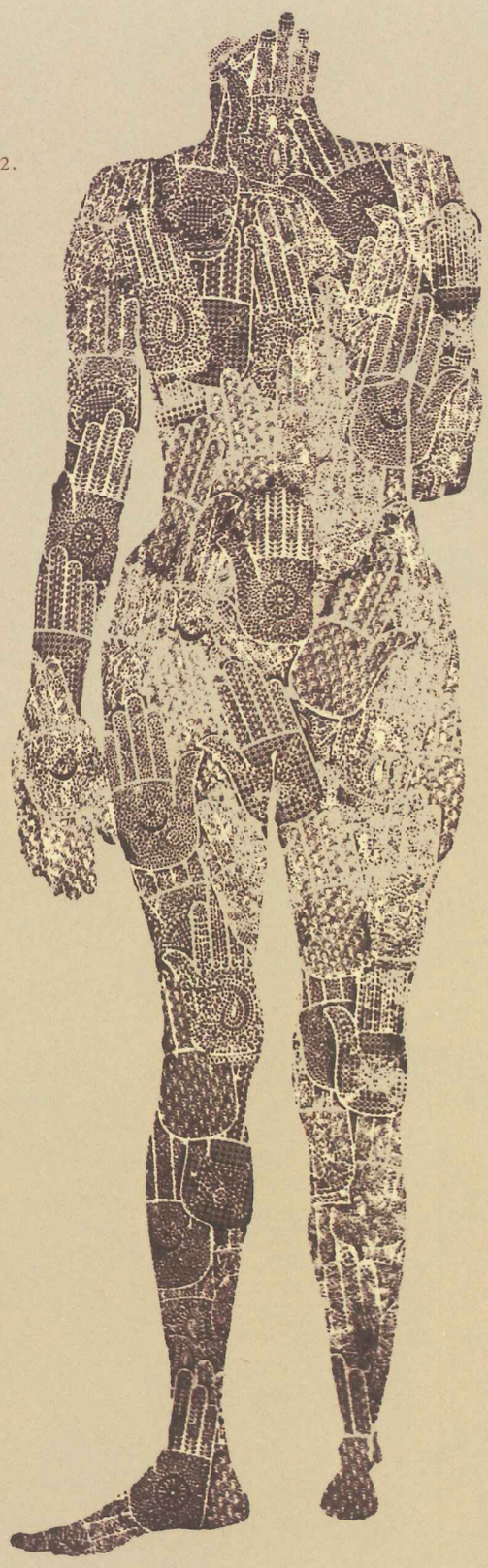
The Lord is the Light
Of the heavens and the earth
The parable of His Light
is as if there were a Niche
And within it is a Lamp:
The Lamp is enclosed in Glass
The glass as it were A Brilliant star:
Lit from a blessed Tree, An Olive,
Neither of the East Nor of the West,
Whose Oil is well-nigh Luminous
Though fire scarce touched it:
Light upon Light!

6.

BE PAKISTANI, BUY PAKISTANI

1.

2.



NAAJO MEHNDI AND HENNA HANDS

NAIZA H. KHAN

Henna or Mehndi is the name of the plant from which the reddish-brown dye is extracted. Leaves of the plant are dried and ground into powder form, which becomes henna paste with the addition of water. This paste is generally used for dyeing and conditioning hair and ephemeral body decoration.

Its cooling effect makes it a popular cosmetic in warm climates and especially in Muslim countries, as it is considered a *Sunnah*, a practice followed by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Henna is included in the *sola singhar*, the sixteen adornments with which women from the subcontinent are expected to beautify themselves (*sola* means sixteen and *singhar* adornment). Ancient Sanskrit texts laid down the concept of *sola singhar*, which are: the *bindi* (on the forehead), necklaces, earrings, flowers in the hair, rings, bangles, *bazubund* (armlet for the upper arm), *cummerbund* (waistband), *pazaib* or *payal* (anklets), kohl, toe rings, henna, perfume, sandalwood paste, the upper and lower garment.[1]

Figure 1. (Left) The package of Naajo Mehndi was designed by Zafar Ali in 1953. The image of this young woman has been executed in watercolour and ink. The English and Urdu text are written on either side of the box and the powder is sealed in plastic to retain the fragrance and strength of this potent cosmetic. It remains in its original packing of a small box which fits a woman's hand.
Size: 12x6.5x3 cm (200 grams)

Figure 2. (Left) Henna Hands. Part of a series of life-sized female figures built with henna, stencilled directly on a wall. This particular image was constructed within the space of a gallery in 2002 by Naiza H. Khan.

The woman in trying to hide herself, reveals herself to be naked.
Louis Bourgeois[2]

Henna, an organic pigment, in its capacity to stain, to mark the body, works also to suggest its physicality. The residue it leaves in the skin embodies the notion of vulnerability and a feeling of sensuality.

Henna has played an essential part in ancient rites and traditions because of its healing, purifying and nourishing qualities. In the subcontinent, it is popular as a natural cosmetic, traditionally used to decorate a bride's hands and feet before her wedding. The pigment is similarly used at other festive occasions such as Eid, Holi or Diwali[i] and even as part of a woman's routine personal toilette.

The design of Naajo Mehndi *(Figure 1)* was created in 1953 by commercial artist Zafar Ali. The original packing has not changed to date. The otherwise plain box is enlivened by the visual of the namesake, a girl named Naajo. Her hands and hair are stained a reddish-brown hue with Naajo Mehndi, advertising the richness of this product. The image dictates a subtle set of codes, which in turn define our perception of the ideal of beauty in the subcontinent—promising the customer results that will transform and perhaps create another idyllic identity.

Naajo holds a sprig of blue flowers in her hand and wears yellow—which indicates the bride-to-be is in *mayoon*.[ii] She is at a threshold, before marriage, of moving into another phase of her life. Embedded in tradition, the significance of henna at this juncture is explained by Clarissa Pinkola Estes: *It is said that the*

i. Eid is a Muslim festival referring to both Eid-ul Fitr and Eid-ul Adha, the first signifying the end of Ramadan (the holy month of fasting) and the other commemorating Prophet Ibrahim's (RA) willingness to sacrifice his son for God. Holi is the Hindu 'Festival of Colours' to welcome spring; Diwali or Deepavali is the Hindu 'Festival of Lights' which symbolises the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness.

ii. *Mayoon* is a ritual during the wedding ceremony. Its main objective is to beautify the bride by massaging/exfoliating skin with *ubtan* (a mixture of turmeric, sandalwood and other herbs) to make it fairer and fresh-looking.

3.

Figure 3. Jamila Mehndi (package)

Jamila is the oldest brand of henna powder in Pakistan and has acquired a loyal following in markets of 64 countries, especially in North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. The term Jamila comes from the Arabic word jamal *meaning beauty.*

Syed Qasim Ali from Faridabad (near New Delhi, India) began trading in henna in 1930 and brought it to Lahore, Pakistan in 1948 CE. His son Syed Abid Ali created the packaged henna powder Jamila in 1963 CE which was successful due to its hundred per cent purity. The package was designed by Saleemullah Siddique and was first printed by Packages Limited, Lahore. Keeping in view the diverse nature of the markets, the text is in four languages, Urdu, English, Arabic and French.

**Not mentioned in text.*

4.

Figure 4. A painting of Lakshmi Bai (c.1830–1858 CE), the Rani of a principality called Jhansi in northern India became prominent after the British East India Company sought to consolidate its power in the mid-nineteenth century. Under the leadership of Lord Dalhousie, the company adopted a policy called the Doctrine of Lapse (1848–1856 CE) which allowed the British to annex an Indian state if the ruler did not have a male heir. Resistance to the policy, and events surrounding the War of Independence 1857, brought the Rani, the widow of the last ruler of the state of Jhansi, into the political spotlight.

Not wishing to give up her kingdom, Lakshmi Bai assembled a volunteer army of 14,000 rebels and ordered that the defences of the city itself be strengthened. Jhansi was attacked in March 1858 and fell to the British forces after a two-week siege. The Rani escaped and joined other Indian rulers and organized a rebellion by convincing them to go on the offensive, and successfully seized the fortress of Gwalior. A battle for Gwalior ensued in which the Rani lost her life. Thus she became a heroine and a symbol of resistance to the British rule.[3]

BEGUM HAZRAT MAHAL, the wife of Wajid Ali Shah, ruler of the princely kingdom of Oudh, North India was a vital player in the 1857 CE uprising against colonial rule. Since her husband was exiled, the courageous lady personally appeared in the battlefield along with other officers to supervise defence operations.[4]

RAZIA SULTANA (1236–1240 CE) was the only woman ever to sit on the throne of Delhi, India. Razia's ancestors were Muslims of Turkish descent who invaded India in the eleventh century. Contrary to custom, her father Iltutmish selected her, over her brothers, to be his successor. 'Like other Muslim princesses, she was trained to lead armies and administer kingdoms if necessary'. After her father's death, she was persuaded to step down from the throne in favour of her step-brother Ruknuddin, who proved to be an incompetent ruler and the people demanded that she become Sultana in 1236 CE. She established peace and order, encouraged trade, built roads, planted trees, dug wells, supported poets, painters, as well as musicians, constructed schools and libraries, appeared in public without the veil, and wore the tunic and headdress of a man. Jealous of her attention to one of her advisors, Jamal uddin Yaqut (an Assyrian), her governor, Altunia, rebelled. Razia's troops were defeated, Yaqut was killed in battle, Razia was captured and married to her conqueror in 1240 CE. One of her brothers claimed the throne for himself, Razia and her new husband were defeated in battle where both died.[5]

matriarchal cultures of ancient India, Egypt, and parts of Asia, and Turkey...the bequeathing of henna and other red pigments to young girls, so that they could stain their feet with it, was a central feature in threshold rites. Regarded as the occasion for one of the most important threshold rites was first menstruation. This rite celebrated the crossing from childhood into the profound ability to bring forth life from one's own belly, to carry the attendant sexual power and all peripheral womanly powers.[6]

Naajo Mehndi has become an icon of our age, not through the customary route of stature or sacredness, but through its popularity over decades. It is due to the ordinary, usual rituals of women's lives that this product has achieved its fame. However, as in many of the activities connected with women there is no heroism visible in this icon. Heroism is not a word often associated with the female sex, her life, and her daily pursuits. Women in our society have been typecast within the genre of sacrifice—a glorified virtue.

Nonetheless there have been alternative models of female heroism in the subcontinent such as Razia Sultana, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and Begum Hazrat Mahal, who have sparked social change. The latter two played a significant role in resisting colonial rule in the country. Alluding to this, William Howard Russell in his *My Indian Mutiny Diary* writes: *It appears, from the energetic character of these Ranis and Begums, that the zenanas and harems (wield) a considerable power and at all events, become able intriguantes. Their contests for ascendancy over the minds of the men give vigour and acuteness to their intellect.*[7]

A comparison of the two images of Lakshmi Bai *(Figure 4)*, and Naajo *(Figure 1)*, reveals how one image has the potential of being the other. A dual identity surfaces here, which is perhaps not surprising. The portrait on the Naajo Mehndi package is a fixed icon, scarcely revealing the multidimensional nature of the female physiognomy, but its contents have the capacity to transform the body.

Henna on the body is different from other forms of adornment such as clothing or jewellery. It has spiritual connotations, as it becomes part of the skin and hence the individual. Here there is a merger of the outer skin and the visceral, the public and the private.

ADORNING THE SENSUAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

The journey from the private to the public is expressed very beautifully in *Sundar nar karat singhar* (The Beauty Adorns) a *Kathak* dance, with roots in classical Hindu

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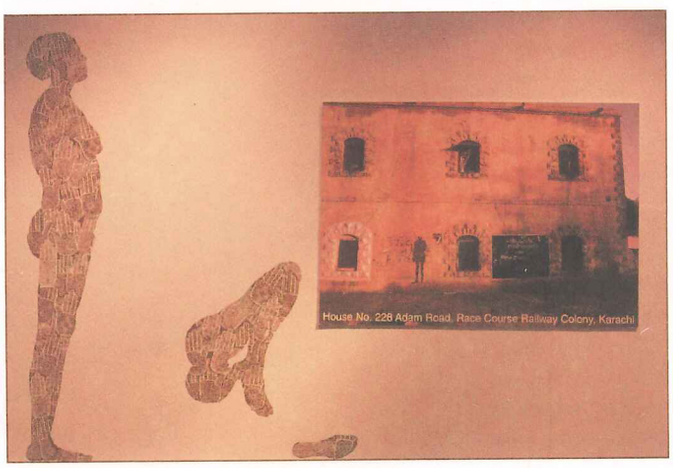

Kathak is a classical dance form which originated over five hundred years ago in the subcontinent. It comes from the word *katha*, which literally means storytelling. The dance re-enacts stories from the Hindu epics such as Mahabharata and Ramayana.

Bharat Natyam is the oldest of all classical dance forms believed to be three thousand years old; it is an amalgam of *bhava* (expressions), *raga* (music), *tala* (rhythm) and *natyam* (dance). It signifies man's quest for God and his desire to unite with the Omniscient.[8]

Thumri is a semi-classical form of Indian music linked to the danced expression of desire and to the cult of Lord Krishna (a theme occurring in most of the poems).[9]

temple dances such as the *Bharat Natyam* that was nurtured by the community of *devadasis* (temple dancers). Performed to a *thumri*, it shows the woman adorning herself in an imagined private space, drawing attention to every detail. The intimacy of her private boudoir is on display. The viewer is drawn into captivity very slowly and led to believe that she is being observed when alone, but is oblivious to the fact.

The ritual of adornment is essential here and part of the strategy of seduction. This is where the sacred and profane seem to coincide, where the body becomes a vehicle for the spiritual and a site for the mythical.

This *thumri* recalls a time when the theme of *shringara rasai*[i] (erotic love) was seen as an important part of religious iconography. We see the expression of divine and erotic love in the carvings of medieval Hindu temples at Khajurao, and Konarak, in Orissa, which depict the sensuality of the human soul through the sculpted representations of the Hindu gods and goddesses.

HENNA HANDS

Henna Hands began as a site-specific project in 2002, which consisted of a series of life-size female figures stencilled onto walls with henna pigment. For me, this work began as a personal investigation into the form and nature of another medium—a non-traditional art material, which dictates its own rules and direction and relies on the gestural and the temporal.

Henna designs are implicitly sensual, denoting the idea of seduction; paradoxically, the woman adorned by it appears as a symbol of subjugation as the henna patterns appear as a sort of 'sold' stamp on the bride's hand. In *Henna Hands* this desire and submission simultaneously resonate and contradict as the eye is focused on the *jaal* (pattern) and the body that surfaces out of it (*Figures 2, 5–9*).

In my work over the last few years, I have been exploring the ambiguous and complex relationship between the female body and cultural identity. The response to this work in the gallery space (*Figure 2*), was marked by an overwhelming frustration of those who wanted to

Figure 5. The plastic hand-shaped stencil used to create patterns with henna.

Figure 6. A figure from 'Henna Hands' on the wall of House No. 228, Adam Road, Race Course Railway Colony, Karachi.

The work started in March 2002 in a lower-middle class area which is home to a community of Parsees (Zoroastrians), Muslims, Christians and Hindus.

Figure 7. The scraped out, graffiti-like female figures in a dhobi ghat (laundry site), Karachi.

Figure 8. The altered images were photographed and rehabilitated within the space of a gallery.

i. The tensions of *shringara rasa* (erotic love) have been a central theme in Indian dance from its inception. When dance was an integral part of the temple rituals, this was depicted as the *atma* (human being/soul) longing for the *param atma* (divine being), a theme that has remained central to *Bharat Natyam*. See www.dakshina.org/events/NGSProgram.pdf

possess the work, and could not do so as it was made directly on the wall, and others who could not see beyond it.

In an attempt to reallocate the *Henna Hands* out of the gallery and studio space I worked in different locations near the Cantonment Station (*Figure 6*) and Railway Colony, in Karachi. I wanted the passer-by to have a very direct relationship to the image on the wall, not only in terms of scale, but through the physicality of the object-figure where associations to the work came through sight, smell and personal history.

In the *dhobi ghat* (laundry site), the implied march of three women was all but scratched out soon after it was made (*Figure 7*). The residue of the original image remains, over time combined with graffiti, *paan* (betel leaf) stains and party political slogans. In another location, the work remained for some time, children enjoyed it, and women angered by the blatant use of the woman's body, argued to see it replaced by that of a man. Conversations and reactions from the residents, visible alterations and additions to the work, censorship of body parts, have been indicators of how people have 'viewed' this work.

The images have slowly been erased, in part preserved, integrated with the writing on the wall, buried under other marks. Within this space of the private and public, the female body becomes a 'site' for inscription, with henna, graffiti, protest...a site in which it gained new meaning to hold notions of the ritualistic, the sacred, the personal, and the political—the boundaries between them, fluid and unstable.

There are associations to this work with the legend of Anarkali, the ultimate covering-up of a body. As the story goes, she was buried alive, her voice disappearing in song, in protest. Not to be seen or heard, her crime was to have awakened desire. Here again, the heroism lies in an act of sacrifice, and not in the consummation of her love.

Anarkali, literally 'pomegranate blossom' (a sobriquet given to her for her beauty) was the legendary beloved of Mughal Prince Salim, later to become Emperor Jahangir. As she was a dancing girl, not of noble birth, the romance was forbidden by the prince's father, Emperor Akbar. Anarkali was buried alive in a wall said to be located within the *bazaar* in Lahore (now named after her) at his orders.

Figure 9 (Right) Henna Hands
Naiza H. Khan
Cantonment Station, Karachi, 2002.

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NAAJO MEHNDI AND HENNA HANDS

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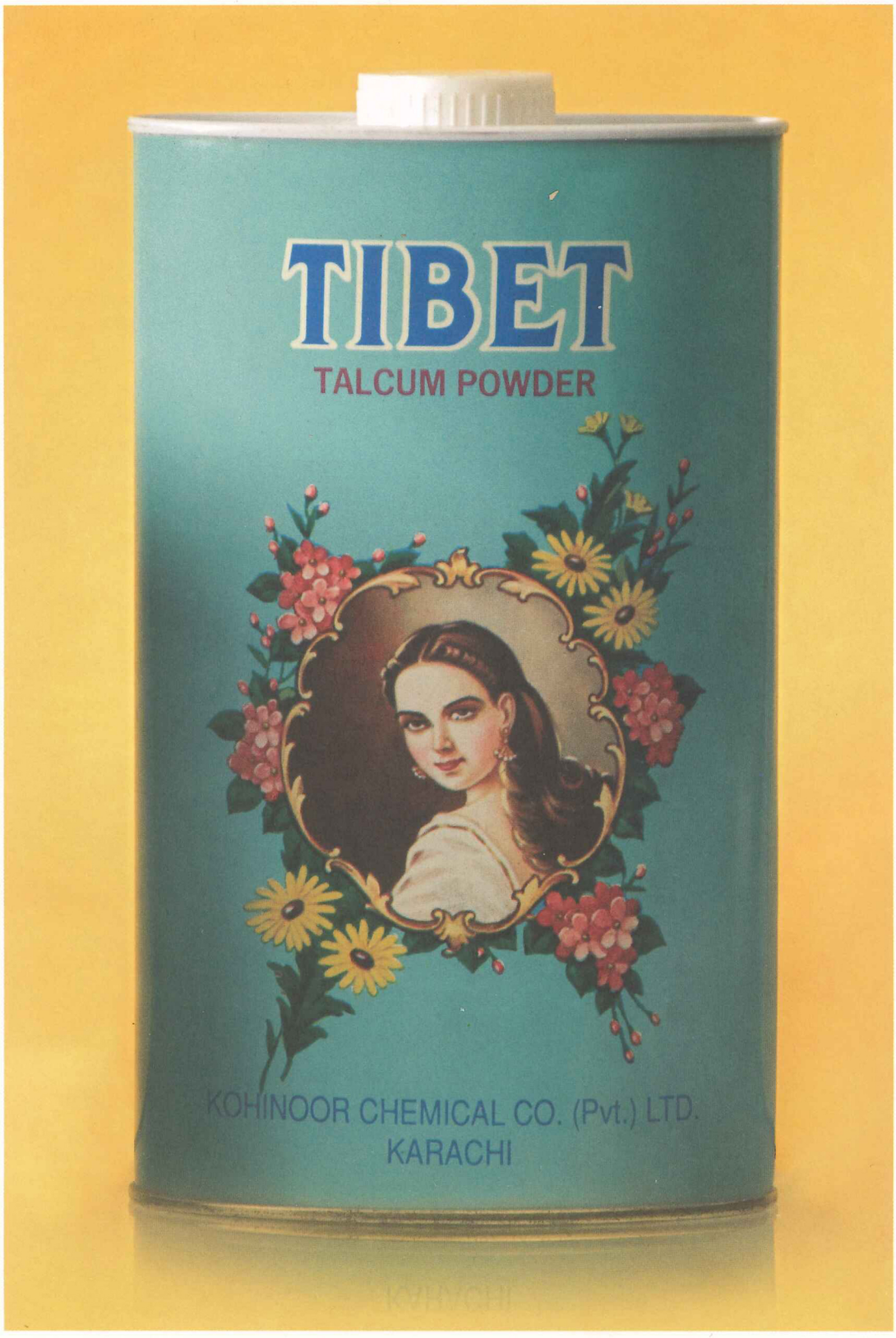

TIBET TALCUM POWDER

DURRIYA KAZI

A larger-than-life Eraj[i] stares out from a looming billboard in Karachi *(not shown)*. The sultry siren beckons, but she is clearly unapproachable and unattainable. Just round the corner, in a small grocery store, a man shopping for his wife reaches out for a humble yet distinct talcum powder box. Its aqua-green front is framed with the cameo of a woman whose image is vaguely reminiscent of 1940s family photographs *(Figure 1)*. In contrast to Eraj, this woman has a socially appropriate smile that is shy yet gently inviting; she is familiar and unchallenging. The images of these two women are as far apart as the distance between the roots of Pakistani society and its grafted branches.

The packaging of Tibet Talcum Powder has remained unchanged since Kohinoor Chemicals launched the product in 1951. Today, the Tibet lady serves as a reminder that in a world of bewildering change, some things reassuringly remain the same. Small wonder then, that the Kohinoor Chemicals call Tibet Talcum Powder its 'good luck' product. Notwithstanding the low price—half that of its nearest imported rival—the loyalty of its buyers suggests that there is more to its lasting success than market forces. It appears to be inexorably linked to its predecessor, Tibet Snow Cream *(Figure 2)*, which marked the Allawallah family's debut in manufacturing (after centuries of trading) as Kohinoor Chemicals.

The cream was the local equivalent of the English product Hazeline Snow, which in 1936 CE was the only cream available in the Indian subcontinent. What Kohinoor Chemicals cleverly did was harness India's desire to partake of the English Dream evoked by the perfumes of the talcs and soaps wafting tantalisingly from the shops onto the streets of Karachi. This desire was strong at the peak of the *Raj*, before the Second World War, writes Pir Ali Muhammad Rashidi in his essay *Woh Din, Woh Log* (Those Days, Those People).[1] He describes the European shops on Karachi's Elphinstone Street, patronized by the ladies of the *Raj*, which only the most privileged locals could tread. While the design of Tibet Snow and later Tibet Talcum Powder emulated the packaging of European

Figure 1. (Left) The aqua-green package of Tibet Talcum powder, Kohinoor Chemicals, Karachi, printed by Elite Publishers.

The woman's portrait within an ornate frame surrounded by flowers was originally designed by Abdus Samad and improved by the artist Mirza Manzoor Ahmed. It is rendered in the airbrush technique. The font utilized for the name of the brand is Slab Serif Outline.

The product was launched in 1951 CE. It is produced in various sizes, with the largest priced at Rs 85.

i. A popular model in the Pakistani fashion and advertising industry.

2.

TIBET SNOW
(Registered)
AN
IDEAL SKIN TONIC
FOR
THE COMPLEXION
Regd.
Tibet
snow
TIBET SNOW
(Registered)
A SOOTHING
AND
REFRESHING
CREAM
KOH-I-NOOR
AMLA
HAIR OIL
(Regd.)
Imparts a splendid gloss to the hair. Beautifies and promotes the growth of the hair, provides nourishment to the scalp and hair roots, Corrects baldness, dandruff, grey or falling hair.
Koh-i-Noor Chemical Co.
KARACHI
Regd.
Tibet
snow
Keeps skin soft and smooth
Koh-i-Noor Chemical Co.
TIBET SNOW
(Registered)
An exquisitely perfumed skin tonic. Beautifies the skin making it velvety, soft and white. It's a sure preventive against roughness, chapping and redness of the skin caused due to heat or cold.
An ideal after shaving and a perfect powder base.
Koh-i-Noor Chemical Co.
KARACHI
Regd.
Tibet
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Face & Hills by
NOOR AHMED
1953
NA-2

3.

products, the similarity ended there. In temperate climates, talcum powder was used as a skin whitener as a mark of ladies of a genteel class; in the hotter subcontinent, men and women used it for its cooling and deodorizing properties. This difference in culture was also manifest in the ritual of tea drinking; in England tea was offered to welcome visitors and comfort the distressed, while in the subcontinent, it was part of every business negotiation from buying carpets in the marketplace to entertaining a marriage proposal.

When Tibet Snow was launched in 1951 CE, the choice for Kohinoor Chemicals for printing its packages was Elite Publishers. The image was first designed in halftone by Abdus Sami, a graduate of the J.J. School of Art, Mumbai; later, artist Mirza Manzoor Ahmed (brother of Mirza Jamil, who owned Elite), converted it to four-tone printing, improving the Tibet Talcum Powder lady whose face still adorns the product today.

The Tibet Talcum Powder lady meets our eyes in a casual glance over her shoulder; she is modest and simultaneously aware of being observed; her loose hair, neatly parted in the centre, frames her face, protected by an ornate mirror frame surrounded by a *rangoon* creeper and chrysanthemums; her gaze, steady and intense, is knowing, holding promise of the passion of a young wife, not the allure of the potential girlfriend of today's advertising.

Manzoor learnt the art of painting from his father, Mirza Noor Ahmed; following in his footsteps he created work for commercial products. His style has links with artists such as Raja Ravi Varma, and early Pakistani artists Nagi and Ustad Allah Bux *(Figure 3)*, and can be considered a refined interpretation of cinema hoarding painters. But while they focused on a voyeuristic gaze, Manzoor's work displays intimacy and sensitivity.

Manzoor's paintings are preserved by his brother Dr Mirza Jamil, who commented that Manzoor had a deep and intuitive understanding of the beauty of the South Asian woman and related the incident of an outraged man who demanded that the artist explain how he had painted his wife's veiled face, which of course, the artist had never seen. Manzoor was part of an entire generation of artists that was inspired by the faces of early South Asian cinema, as Nikhat Kazmi describes in *Dream Merchants of Bollywood*. The actress Waheeda Rehman, in particular, was an ode to femininity for such artists *(Figure 4)*. For example, in *Chaudhvi Ka Chand* (1960), Guru Dutt was mesmerised by the beauty of his sleeping wife, played by Waheeda Rehman: *Hers was a*

Figure 2. The original artwork for the packaging of Tibet Snow cream, carrying the signature of Noor Ahmed, dated 1953 CE. The monogram of Koh-i-Noor Chemical Company includes Karachi and Dacca, the latter from the then East Pakistan.

The company is named after Kohinoor, the legendary diamond, once the coveted possession of the Raja of Malwa since the 1300s. Passing through the hands of Mughal Emperor Babar and then Nadir Shah of Persia, it was eventually presented to Queen Victoria in 1850 CE by the East India Company and now adorns the British crown.

Figure 3. Intizaar (WAITING)
Ustad Allah Bux.
Oil on canvas, 57x50 cm, 1924.

face that glowed behind the veil—a face that was created by an imagination bred on poetry, myth and legend... Rehman is the enchanting wife with her wild black tresses lying around her, compounded by the gentle serenity of her expression. She was the warm loving wife, signalling a storm of secret pleasures from behind a silken veil. She was all that was presumed hidden behind the veil.[2]

It is significant that Waheeda Rehman's enduring image is one of a woman asleep. Most young girls in South Asia are advised to avert their eyes from the prying male gaze and allow themselves to be observed without challenge or invitation. The sensuous young woman of Tibet Talcum Powder inhabits the hidden spaces of this collective male longing. The painted image of Musarrat Shaheen wearing a man's turban and staring out from the back of a truck is a disturbing yet exciting challenge for the traditional Pakistani male. And these perceptions were not just limited to South Asia. For example, post-revolution Irani cinema allowed women to appear on screen provided they did not look directly into the camera.

In traditional South Asian society, an unmarried woman was not encouraged to groom her looks, wear make-up or jewellery. This was reserved for the bride who is given a dowry of clothes and jewellery, primarily to be appreciated by her husband (*Figure 6*). Some mirror paintings echoing this theme can still be found on built-in wardrobes in the old Hindu houses of Karachi, for instance, the replica of *Hamsa Damayanti* by Raja Ravi Varma at Guru Mandir (*Figure 7*). They depict the woman of the house in a pale, magenta sari with hair gently held in a full coil at the nape of her neck. She looks lost in wonderful thoughts with a soft smile on her small curved mouth. Such icons were intended to strengthen perceptions of what a woman should be like. At that time there was none of the present rush to the homogeneous, international, independent, sexually aware young girl who poses modernity's challenge to society's boundaries of tolerance.

Today, the images that sell most products are of young men and women with a blurred national identity that is inspired by international fashion and advertising icons. This is the outcome of using global market principles to inform marketing strategies. These assume a universal middle class with shared aspirations to attain a common standard of living as defined by the West. The ambitions of global marketing superseded the earlier concepts of local market research that were defined by the needs of a specific society. Social anthropologist Gerald Berthould describes the growing belief among decision-makers that *the market should no longer be viewed as an institution that must be regulated by external social forces, but, on the contrary, that it should be used to regulate society as a whole.*[3] In other words, society was to be controlled and led by the marketing needs of companies. A corollary explains that this is only made possible by removing *obstacles* described as *various inhibiting ideas and practices such as myths, ceremonies, rituals...of a society.*[4] The success of this strategy, disguised as aspirations of the modern person, can be seen in the tendency to create a distance from *groups closest to him in order to become closer to those remote from him*[5] choosing Nike rather than Servis shoes, 'Made as (sic) Japan' rather than 'Made in Pakistan'. Today, it is unlikely for a new product to be named 'Tibet' or a company 'Kohinoor'—there are higher chances of selecting names which cross national and cultural boundaries like 'Swiss Alps' or 'Diamond'.

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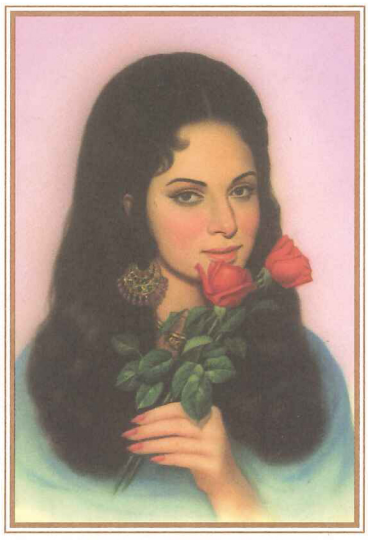

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Figure 4. A portrait of the film heroine of yesteryears Waheeda Rehman, painted by Mirza Manzoor Ahmed (c.1960).

Figure 5. A trunk constructed from rejected tin sheets of Tibet Talcum Powder packaging, available in local markets.

Figure 6. The painting of a woman wearing traditional jewellery and a tinsel-edged dupatta over her head, which probably signifies her newly wed status. Painted by Mirza Manzoor Ahmed for a Tibet calendar (c.1960).

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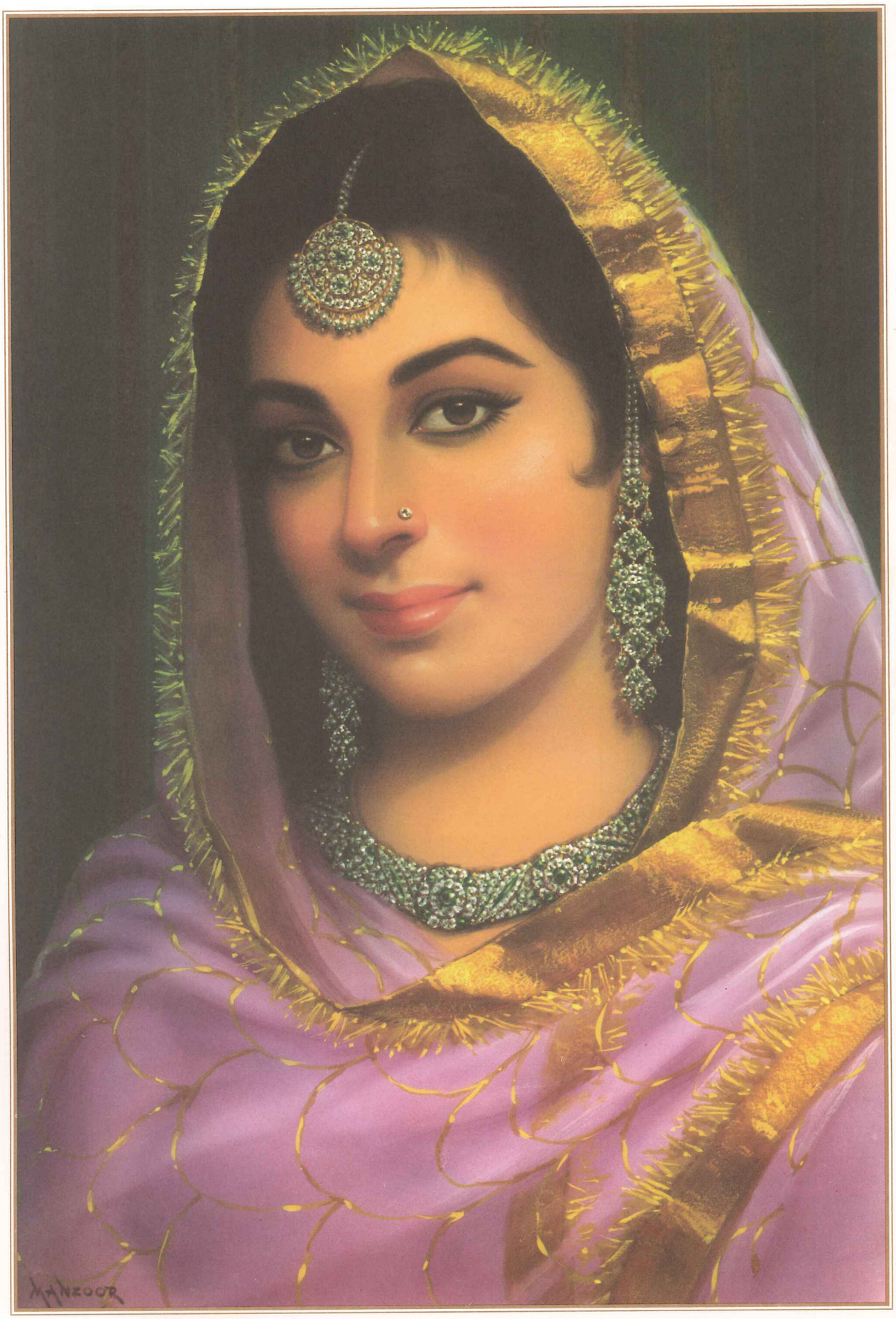

TIBET TALCUM POWDER

The lasting success of Tibet Talcum Powder (and Tibet Snow) stands out as an exception. Their names consciously locate the product; Tibet bringing to mind images of the snowy peaks—a powerful psychological draw for someone in the hot plains—one of the most mythologized mountain ranges in the world. In fact, mountains are viewed as links between humans and the spiritual world. For example, Mount Kailas (in western Tibet) is considered important not only because its slopes give rise to the four major rivers of South Asia; it was also the abode of Parvati, the epitome of the perfect woman: a devoted wife, whose qualities include wisdom and knowledge.

Fascination with this ideal woman continues today in Pakistani street subcultures, in the form of greeting-card images, stickers, schoolbook illustrations and the occasional television or film heroine. The key to the Pakistani spirit remains its undying romanticism. Friendship, filial love, loyalty in the workplace, sacred and profane love, proverbs, poetry, and even the manner of conducting business or political campaigns, is assimilated within the framework of romantic emotion. Romance has always had more power than raw sexuality. Arrows through bleeding hearts, stickers of women seductively veiled or looking out from behind venetian blinds, and romantic verse, fill the album of popular art.

For its part, Kohinoor Chemicals remains loyal to the marketplace rather than the market principle for its economic success. This suggests that the pre-'global' system of responding to, rather than directing social needs, still works. This takes on significance in post-modern and postcolonial contexts, when histories are being rewritten. During these exercises, much like this one, cultural memories and cultural constants become signposts to reclaim history. In Pakistan, where many languages and cultures exist, the sources of collective memory are diverse. The more unifying elements tend to be films, film songs and stars, religious events such as Eid, Ramadan and Muharram, and to these I would like to add Tibet Talcum Powder.

Thus, Tibet Talcum Powder performs the dual role of provoking nostalgia and becoming part of the modern landscape without shedding its original identity. It is a cultural icon even for people who may not necessarily use talcum powder. In fact, the product is not just a mainstay within Pakistan; expatriate communities are the main focus of Kohinoor's international trade. It has also given rise to alternative spin-offs such as reject Tibet Talcum Powder packaging sheets that are used to make small metal trunks, (*Figure 5*) or little boxes, which I enjoy collecting, much like secrets of a past that one refuses to let go of.

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7.

Figure 7. Hamsa Damayanti

This image from a cupboard in a haveli at Guru Mandir, Karachi, is a reproduction of Hamsa Damayanti, a painting by Raja Ravi Varma (1900 CE), a court painter to Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaikwad of Baroda.

It portrays an episode from the Sanskrit epic, Mahabharata, in which a swan acting as a messenger relates to Damayanti, daughter of King Virbhadra, the qualities of Nala, King of Nishadha. Draped in a sari, Damayanti listens to the celestial swan whose 'wings were of pure gold'. The painting is reminiscent of the well known Western legend of Leda and the Swan.

Ravi Varma (1848–1906 CE) received his preliminary lessons in traditional Tanjore painting and was later taught portrait painting in oils by Theodore Jensen, a European artist.

Varma went on to become the most distinguished and sought-after local artist, admired by both the Indian royalties and the British rulers, who conferred on him the title of 'Raja'. He presented a new naturalistic interpretation of the Indian myths and legends which became immensely popular. He established an oleograph press to mass produce posters of epic heroes and heroines, gods and goddesses which reached every corner of the subcontinent.

— YUNUS KHIMANI
Associate Professor and Dean, Under Graduate Programme,
Indian Institute of Crafts and Design
Jaipur, India

Figure 8. A young girl painted by Mirza Manzoor Ahmed for a Tibet calendar (c.1960 CE).

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TIBET TALCUM POWDER

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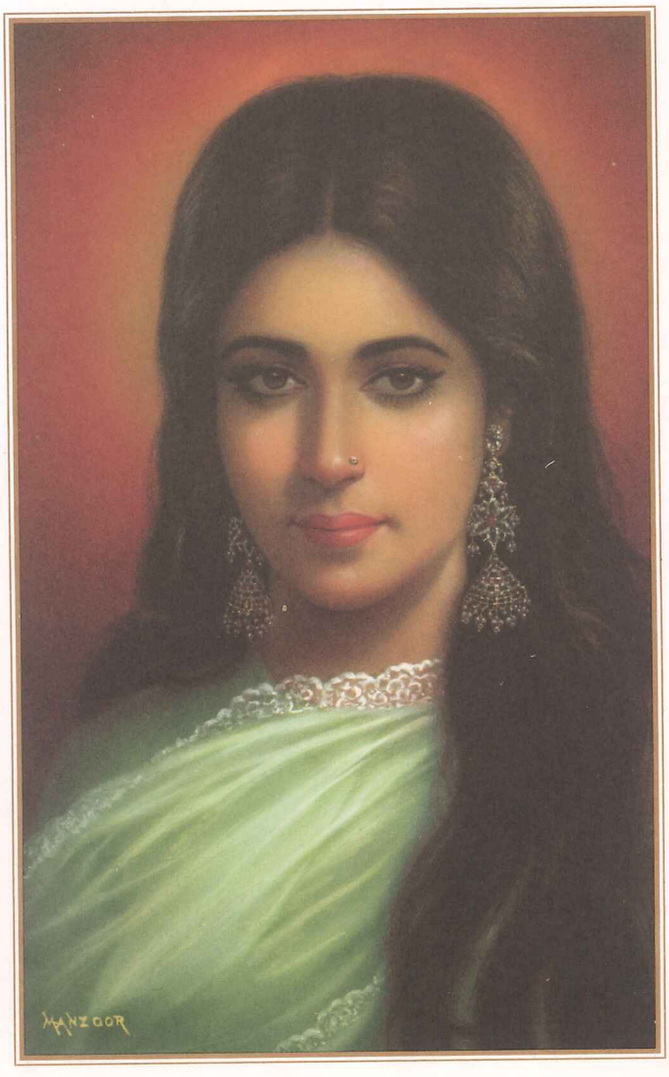

Figures 9–11. These portraits in airbrush are part of a series of Mirza Manzoor Ahmed's paintings created for Tibet calendars from 1950s to 1970s. Preserved by his brother Dr Mirza Jamil, the owner of Elite Publishers (S.I.T.E., Karachi) these images of subcontinental women were created by an imagination bred on the Indian cinema.

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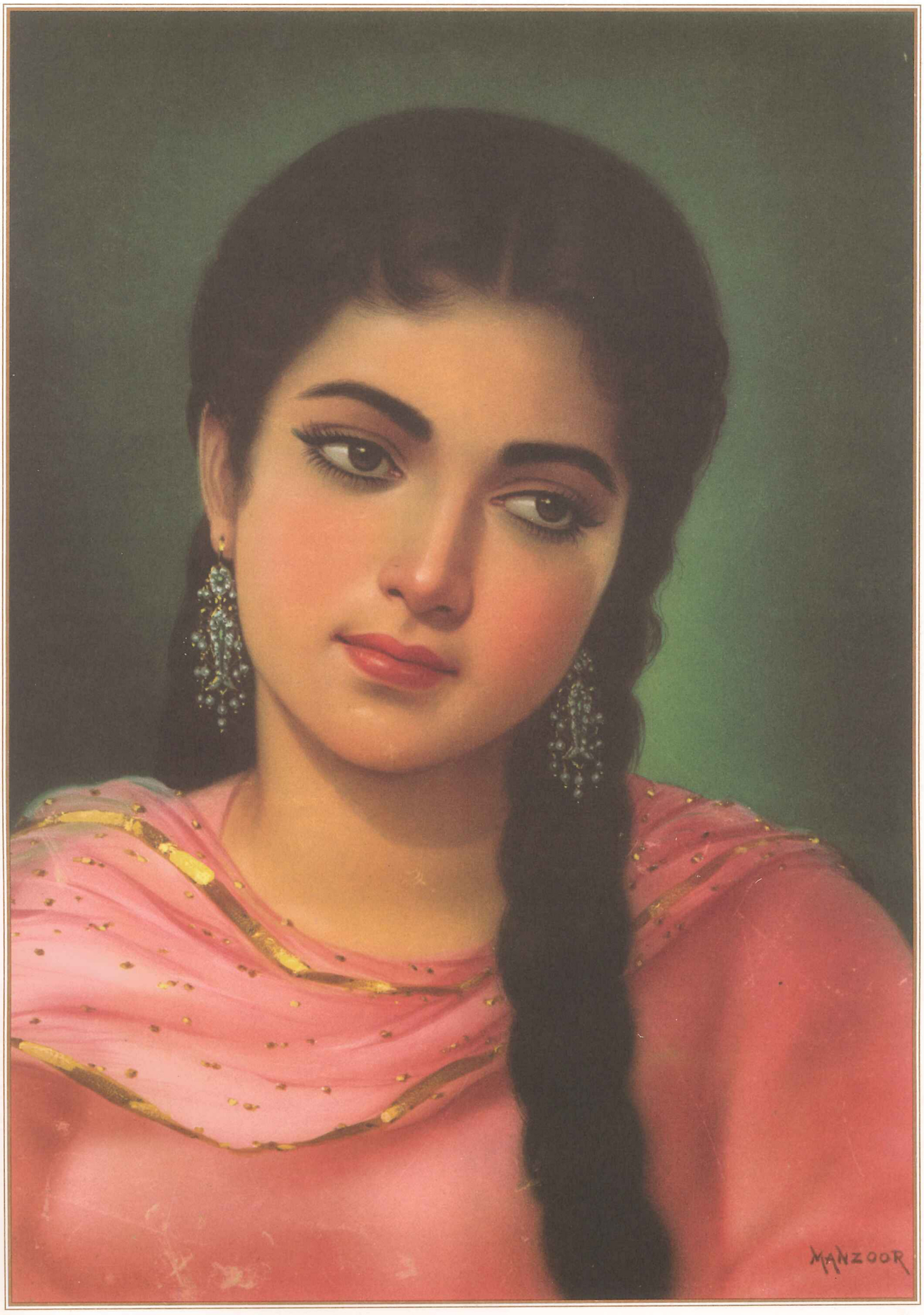

TIBET TALCUM POWDER

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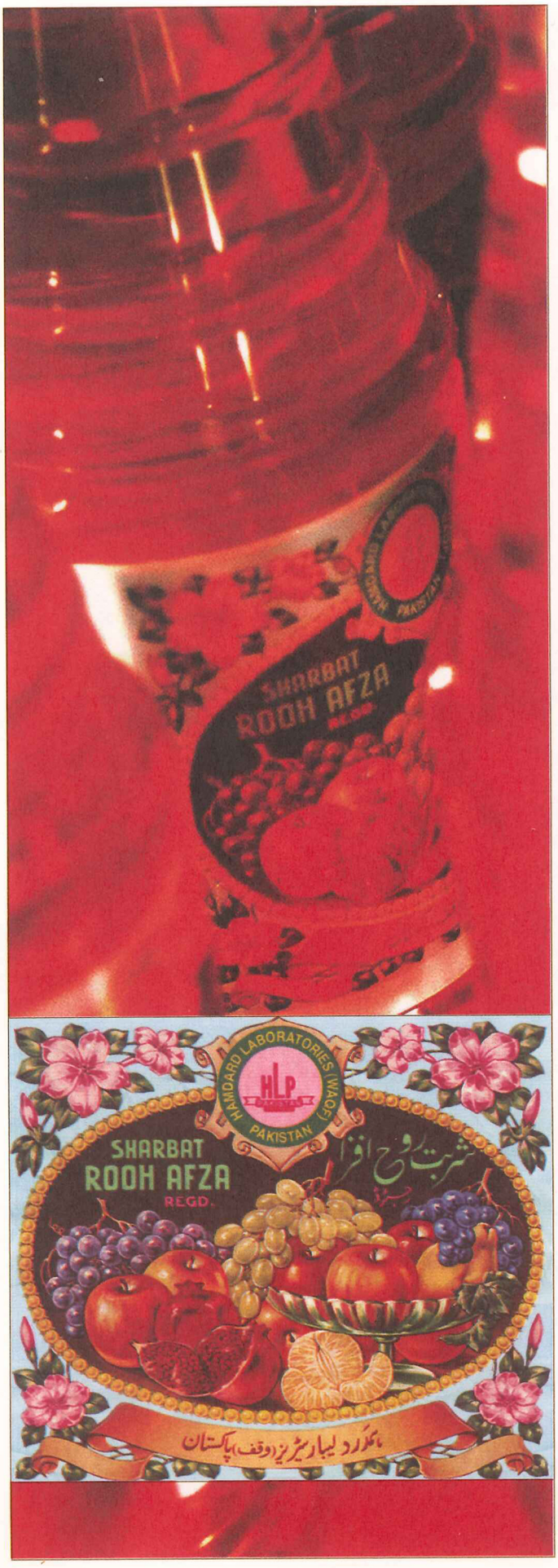

ZARMINAE ANSARI

ROOH AFZA, DRINK OF THE EAST!
A Case Study of Iconography and Successful Branding

ZARMINAE ANSARI

Being a design icon often has less to do with design than image, and sometimes, nothing to do with 'good' design altogether (*Minar-e Pakistan*[i] being a case in point). It is the image that is projected, absorbed, accepted, that is more important in defining and iconifying a product of design, be it architecture, graphic or product design.

This is the case with the 'Drink of the East', Rooh Afza. I will discuss its status as an icon, its advertising strategy, the history and design, and intend to show that the success of its brand-positioning is reflected in its strong associations for diasporic communities.

This impossibly red drink conjures up memories and strong associations for many of those who have been subjected to its advertising campaigns. It is one of the products that invoke the memory of 'home' in the subcontinental diaspora, since it has so successfully associated itself with the image that 'home' invokes.

ROOH AFZA AS AN ICON

What is an icon? Arguably, the best definitions of icons can be found away from the lands of their birth. Let me explain.

Take the example of mosques in North America[1] built by Muslim communities through charitable contributions. Excepting rare instances with the rare architect, the community usually insists on visual identifiers such as pre-fabricated fibreglass domes and some form of minaret. The dome as an architectural element was developed as a structural system to span large areas without columns, leaving uninterrupted space below. It was also used as a design element to raise the eyes of the believer toward the heavens, which it symbolized. The dome is now a conciliatory gesture on a building with a structural system that does not need it: this happens because the community has iconified the dome as a symbol of the mosque.

Similarly, before the advent of electricity, loudspeakers and noise regulation laws, the minaret was a purely

i. A national monument commemorating the Lahore Resolution, in Lahore *(see page 161)*.

DESIGN

The logotype of Rooh Afza in Urdu is attributed to Syed Manzooruddin, a calligrapher who learnt penmanship from various masters in Moradabad, a site for printing and publishing books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. He started his own career in calligraphy in 1937 CE and worked for famous newspapers of the day: *Jiddat*, *Muslim League* and *Mukhbir-e Alam*. He moved to Delhi in 1944 CE to work for Hamdard. The original label, still used by Rooh Afza was painted by the miniature artist Mirza Noor Ahmed. It has a powder blue background decorated with traditional floral patterns. The main subject of the label is a still life of various fruits. A scrolling ribbon with the company's name adds to the look and feel of baroque frescoes. The frame and old-fashioned colours evoke an antique feel.

The original glass bottle, developed in Germany (now replaced by a handy polythylene terephthalate—PET bottle) is approximately 11" high. The 5" long neck, narrows from a 4.5" radius to 1" at the cap. Five evenly spaced, protruding rings added for strength to the neck are an identifying feature retained in the PET bottles. The golden cap at 1.25" and embossed with the Rooh Afza trademark started off as a cork, followed by white plastic caps.

It is uncertain whether the red additive was inspired by a tradition of red-coloured sherbets and fruit juices of the rose and pomegranate, or was the natural result of the ingredients. In any case, the colour has become synonymous with sweet thirst quenchers, and has led to many imitations—a fact noted and commented on by the marketing departments of Rooh Afza: 'Every new syrup is red... but every red syrup is not Rooh Afza'.

Figure 1. A bottle of Rooh Afza.

Introduced in 1907 CE, Rooh Afza, has retained the original label painted by Mirza Noor Ahmed, while the calligraphy was rendered by Syed Manzooruddin.

functional tower from which the *muezzin*[i] could call the faithful to prayer. However, the minaret, like the dome has also become iconified as a symbol of Islam and of a building where the faithful gather to pray five times a day. While the only architectural element truly necessary in building a mosque is a uniform piece of land and the direction of the *qiblah*;[ii] the community in diaspora insists on this pastiche that defies all contextuality and architectural relevance.

Rooh Afza too is an icon, and the diasporic communities are a wonderful gauge of this phenomenon; the cultural repertoire of the diaspora includes *iftars*,[iii] eid parties,[iv] wedding functions, engagement parties—where Rooh Afza often has a visible presence. Every online shopping site for *desi*[v] food abroad, supplies Rooh Afza and Googling tells you that certainly it is an established cultural icon: appearing on MTV India website, to *desi* chat/newsrooms. To this Pakistani community,[vi] Rooh Afza usually represents the following in no particular order: the East, purity, natural health, age-old wisdom and of course, 'home'.

'Home' is a set of tenuously connected ideas. In *Imaginary Homelands*, Salman Rushdie writes '*... exiles or immigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge—which gives rise to profound uncertainties—that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind*'.[2] In this case: the 'East' of the mind.

The marketing strategy of Rooh Afza, the 'Summer Drink of the East', successfully identified the product with the East. Like so many other constructs of the postcolonial world, national identity and architecture, for example, cultural identity too, as pointed out by Eric Hobsbawm is an 'Invention of Tradition', implying a 'continuity with the past'—often a suitable historical past.[3]

In the case of Pakistan, 'our' identity, displayed proudly in the ads, celebrates a glorious past. It is interesting to note that the chosen past representing cultural identity is religious, not regional. Islamic history is extensively used: when regional references are made, they are from a particular era in history—the Mughal Period. Architecture, my analogy of choice, works well here: just look at contemporary Pakistani national buildings that borrow from this specific era in 'our' history—specifically the Mughal, as opposed to Mohenjo-daro, the Hindu Shahiya Temples of the Salt Range, or the Gandhara ruins at Taxila. These advertisements are a reader on great Muslim scholars and achievements. Not just in ads such as these, but also in every sphere of our public lives, we tend to

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i. *Muezzin*, the one who recites the *azaan*, call to prayer.

ii. *Qiblah*, direction of Ka'aba in Makkah which Muslims face while performing prayer or *salaat*.

iii. *Iftar*, breaking of the fast at sunset in the holy month of Ramadan.

iv. *Eid-ul Fitr*, celebrating the end of the month of fasting and *Eid-ul Adha*, celebration at the end of the annual pilgrimage to Makkah.

v. *Desi*, (colloquial) of, or belonging to the subcontinent.

vi. Based on personal interviews carried out by the author.

HISTORY

Rooh Afza, a bright red rose-flavoured drink concentrate was introduced in 1907 CE by an organisation devoted to the *Unani* (Greek, in Arabic and Urdu) system of medicine, called Hamdard Dawakhana.

The word 'Rooh Afza' literally means 'spirit-enhancing' or 'soul-uplifting'. There are conflicting and uncorroborated theories about the source of the name. Besides the obvious reason, and decades of successful branding as *Rahat-e Jan Rooh Afza*, Rooh Afza was also the name of a weekly publication from Jaunpur in 1882 CE. Another inspiration could be a well known book about ancient legends: *Masnavi Gulzar-e Nasim* (c.1254 *Hijra*), which was popular at the time, in which Rooh Afza was the daughter of Muzaffer Shah, King of Firdaus. According to a report based on research carried out by students of Karachi University, and interviews with Masood Ali, (Art Director, Hamdard) and S. Rehman Ali (Deputy Director, Hamdard) the drink may have possibly been named after a Turkish princess in the Khilafat-e Osmania, or a fairy in the book *Talism-e Hoshruba*.

Whatever the true origins of its name, Rooh Afza remains one of the star products of Hamdard. The first processor of Rooh Afza was Hakim Ustad Hasan Khan of Saharanpur. He came to Delhi and worked at the first Hamdard laboratory and kept a diary of the early stages of its preparation. He eventually migrated to Pakistan, and his diaries are a living history of the drink. Hakim Hafiz Abdul Majeed, founder of Hamdard, created the drink in a previously unused combination of the essences of fruits and flowers, as well as medicinal herbs, roots and aromatic woods. It was purported to have medicinal qualities and was included in Hamdard's first list of drugs.

After Hakim Majeed's death in 1922 CE, his son, Hakim Abdul Hameed took over. Another son, Hakim Said, migrated to Karachi on the eve of Partition and also founded a Hamdard in Pakistan. In 1948 CE, Hakim Abdul Hameed, in India, converted the commercial company into a 'Charitable Trust'. On this side of the border too, the respected late Hakim Muhammad Said used the profits of Hamdard Laboratories (*Waqf*) to establish charitable institutions and another Hamdard University in Pakistan.

ignore the varied strains of religion or region, and consciously choose, cultural elements conforming to an Islamic identity.

ADVERTISING STRATEGY

Over the course of the last century, a highly focused advertising campaign concentrated on two basic elements that constitute its image: tradition and health *(Figures 2–11)*. It is fascinating that the company did not try to position Rooh Afza as a Ramadan drink, instead, the market started responding to its image as a traditional drink, with health benefits (according to S. Rehman Ali, Deputy Director at Hamdard). The connection made it the drink *du jour* during Ramadan, and the marketing divisions caught on to this apparently spontaneous phenomenon. The advertising season for Rooh Afza starts before summer in April, and then before and during Ramadan.

The campaigns that fall into the 'tradition' category and that established Rooh Afza as *Mashroob-e Mashriq* or the 'Drink of the East' included the following:

- Eastern hospitality
- Connections with the glorious (Islamic) past
- Nationalism
- Ramadan

Back in 1970, an advertisement showed a girl in traditional dress serving a disproportionately large glass to a disembodied hand wearing glass bangles *(Figure 4)*. The copy reads, *Being eastern is modern again*. Picking up on the hippy movement and the fascination of the West with all things Eastern it continued *once again the West looks to us for eastern music... and for eastern drink: like Rooh Afza, rich with the wisdom of the East, for the summer in the East.* Later, an ad implied that serving ready-made drinks to guests was somehow short-changing them: Eastern hospitality required that you *prepare* a drink such as 'the Eastern original' *(Figure 5)*.

In the 'Splendours of the East' campaign of 1983 a tenuous connection was established between Rooh Afza and the achievement of the ancient East in the fields of painting, knowledge and wisdom, and building *(Figures 6&7)*. This theme was continued in a later campaign in 1996. Each ad in this didactic campaign concentrated on the life and work of a great scholar of Islam: Omar Khayam, Ibn-e Sina, Ibn-e Hesham, Al-Biruni, etc. Again, the connection between their achievements and Rooh Afza is established as the precursor to the tradition of experimentation and scholarship that led to the development of the drink. Another campaign relied on

text-heavy ads punning on the word 'rooh' or spirit/essence in Urdu: *The spirit/essence of... nationalism*. The spirit/essence of science, of spirituality, of progress, of time/history, and so on.

Nationalism provides great fodder for the imagination in Pakistani marketing. In these campaigns the print ads have a nationalistic copy or a poem, with images of the youth of the nation (which include only men, of course!) carrying out research, playing sports and celebrating *(Figure 10)*. In 1997, jumping on the official bandwagon, an ad lauds efforts by the government to forcibly reduce wasteful expenditure at weddings, and recommends serving Rooh Afza milkshake as a socially conscious alternative to the usual lavish meals!

Last, but by no means the least, 'tradition' is evoked by the Ramadan ad campaigns *(Figure 9)*. Rooh Afza as *The essential part of Ramadan and fasting—custom, culture and necessity.* In fact, Rooh Afza as 'necessity' is quite successfully marketed as not just a thirst-quenching drink at *iftar*, but one with the medicinal properties that make it the perfect energy booster as well. Another ad says, *fasting is a religious obligations,* (sic) *Rooh Afza make fulfilling it more pleasant*. If anything, the English version of the ads with their uncomfortable turn of phrase, added to the syrup's image as a 'traditional Pakistani' drink.

The second basic element of Rooh Afza's image is the health aspect. Countless campaigns recommended Rooh Afza with lemon for its health benefits during humid weather, especially during the monsoons. Text-heavy ads suggest ways of avoiding heat exhaustion and heat stroke, and include drinking Rooh Afza instead of plain water to avoid dehydration and loss of body salts.

Finally, another type of campaign, uses the accolades, trophies and awards this product has received for export performance from the Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Its quality and international presence are celebrated: *Loved at home. Admired round the world* and *Quality at all cost* has become a kind of trademark in the print ads. The campaigns also reassure its target audience that it is relatively inexpensive: *Enjoy a glass of Rooh Afza at half the cost of many other drinks.*

The most remarkable characteristic of the company's business development is the lack of innovation in the product line: not necessarily a bad thing. Instead of diluting Rooh Afza's image (pun intended) by introducing different flavours or value-added products, campaigns with recipe ideas were launched; suggesting its addition to different desserts and drinks to create variety *(Figure 11)*.

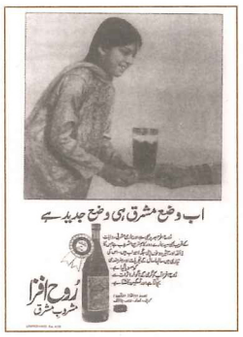
An important change in the marketing of Rooh Afza has probably been the PET bottle and the family size bottle. In a first for the company, the PET bottle was introduced through a massive launch that included vertical half-page teasers in the major newspapers, with follow up ads in the electronic media and banners on over a hundred billboards across Pakistan. Hamdard's objective was contemporizing the product making it more relevant in the new century, while retaining what made it successful and a favourite for generations.

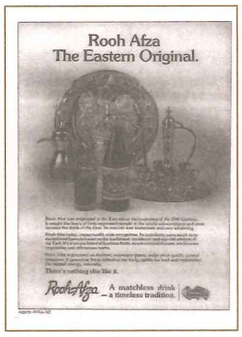
Rooh Afza seems poised to conquer this century too.

Figures 2–11. Advertisements of Rooh Afza printed in newspapers and magazines.

2–3.

4–5.

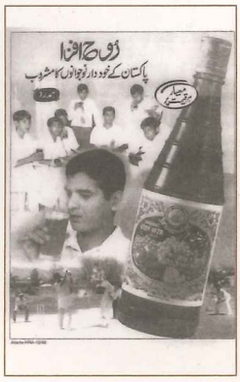


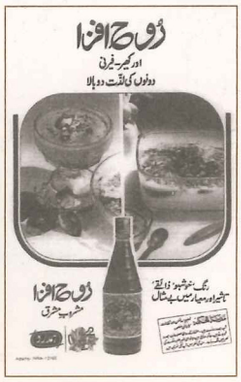


6–7.

8–9.

10–11.





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THE PAKOLA TALE

MARIAM ALI BAIG

PROLOGUE—KARACHI THROUGH GREEN-TINTED BOTTLES

When I came to Karachi in the early 1960s, after a childhood spent abroad, one of the things that made a lasting impression on me was the green Pakola bottle. In fact, it was the content of the bottle that was green; still the bottle looked that way to me.

That bottle was everywhere. On billboards, at birthday parties, at school; even lurking inside hives of unevenly stacked crates in places like the Bridge Stores.[i] I had never seen a fizzy drink that was...well, so *green*; although I must admit that the colour did nothing to recommend itself to me. Eventually, however, when I scrunched up enough courage to attempt a sip of the ice cream soda, I found, to my surprise, that its taste was quite palatable—a sweet marshmallowy flavour that engendered feelings of comfort and well-being. Yet for me, it always remained hinged on getting past the colour.

Despite this ambivalence, when I look back at those Pakola-tinted days, nostalgia creeps in. Karachi was a different place then. Cleaner no doubt; violence-free, certainly. Those were the days of the Benz mango juice, sundaes at the Demi Tasse and milkshakes at Ampi's. A time when eating out meant Chinese at the ABC on Elphinstone Street[ii] and shopping at Sanaullah's. And in the midst of all this—that green drink.

Pakola, by its sheer ubiquity, defined Karachi's landscape in the late sixties. In fact, at a time when the concept of 'branding' as we know it today was, for all intents and purposes, non-existent, Pakola had majestic brand presence.

THE SETH AND THE *Raireewallah*

Pakola was the creation of seven Memon[iii] brothers hailing from the Teli family of Surat, who migrated to Pakistan in 1947, and established a company known as

Figure 1. (Left) Glass bottles of Pakola Ice Cream Soda. Height 22 cm

i. A popular supermarket of the 1960s, like the current Agha's in Karachi.

ii. Now renamed Zaibunissa Street.

iii. Memon: Community mainly hailing from Kathiawar, Kutch & Sindh; traditionally involved in business and entrepreneurship.

Pakistan Beverage (Pvt) Limited in 1950. Little did they know that soon they would develop a flavour so uniquely suited to the Pakistani palate that it would become a brand icon for the country. *(Figures 1, 2&3)*

So where did this most original, taste bud-enticing flavour come from?

Pakola family lore says it was derived from one of several concoctions offered by the *raireewallah* (the quintessential subcontinental pushcart man) to pedestrians on hot, sweltering days. One may pause here and imagine a young Seth[i] Haji Muhammad Ali Teli in Saddar on a summer's day, in dire need of refreshment, stopping the *raireewallahs* and chancing upon a formula derived from vanilla, chocolate and rose water. Whatever the case, the Seth's taste buds were definitely onto something. Whether he had any inkling that he was about to launch a product destined to become one of Pakistan's greatest home-grown brands, is a matter of speculation.

THE PATRIOTIC TASTE

Seth Haji Muhammad Ali Teli made three decisions that would secure the success of the future brand.

First, he had the formula refined by two international companies (Bush, Barnett and Fosters and Clayton and Jowett), specialising in the composition of carbonated drinks. Second, he invested in a manufacturing plant and put the premium on quality. He imported from the United States automated machines that did not require the bottles to be hand washed and filled. Furthermore, the water component that went into the formulation of Pakola was filtered through the UV method,[ii] something unheard of in those days. This technology enabled the Teli brothers to print on the labels of every Pakola bottle, 'Untouched by human hands' *(Figure 2)*.

Third, he showed great marketing acumen by choosing a brand name that matched the mood of the time. In those early years, Pakistan was high on patriotism. He had the perfect colour (green equals Pakistan). Could anything have been more inspired than Pak(istani) (C)ola?

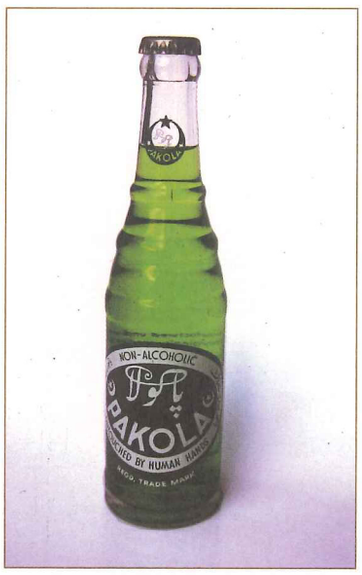
Pakola was launched on 14 August 1950, the third anniversary of Pakistan's creation, in Karachi (the then capital of Pakistan), at the Pakistan Air Force Base on Drigh Road[iii] in the presence of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan. And thus was forged an enduring association between brand and country.

It was patriotic advertising at its best.

K. U. Malany and Company, the Karachi representative of the world-renowned advertising agency J. Walter Thompson (with its subcontinental base in Bombay), was appointed to consolidate the positioning of Pakola as the first one hundred per cent Pakistani formulated soft drink. The account stayed with Malany and Co. for fifteen years, after which it moved to a number of successive advertising agencies, including National

i. Seth: Colloquial term for a Memon business tycoon.
ii. Ultraviolet water purification.
iii. Now renamed Shahrah-e Faisal.

2.



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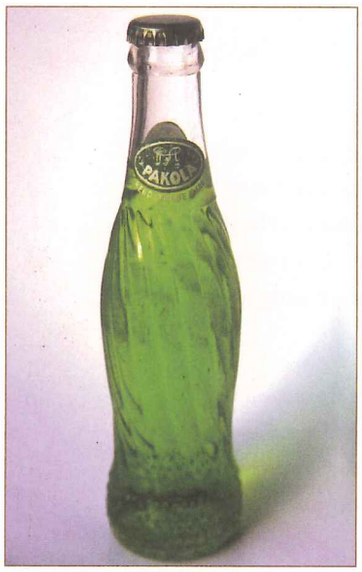


Figure 2. A Pakola ice cream soda bottle design from the 1950s. A crescent and star is printed on the neck of the bottle. The main oval label has 'Non-alcoholic' and 'Untouched by human hands' written on it along with 'Pakola' in Urdu and English. The patriotic connection is further depicted by two sets of crescents and stars, anchoring the brand name.

Figure 3. A Pakola ice cream soda bottle design from the 1970s. The earlier oval label was simplified and reduced to fit on the bottle's neck.

Advertising, Wings Advertising, Manhattan Communications, and now RG Blue.

Pakola's success was thus built on three strong pillars: quality, consumer acceptance and good marketing. Another factor that played its due role in establishing the brand was price. Confident of the quality offered, a case (24 bottles) was priced at five rupees, double the 2.50 rupees charged by other brands—and as we know, consumers do not always opt for the cheapest, if they believe they are getting value for their money.

The brand flourished and the fifties and sixties became Karachi's Pakola-tinted decades. Pakola has always been a Karachi drink. It would be relevant to note here that although Pakola had, and still has, a presence in Sindh, the brand never made it big up north, perhaps because by the time the company got around to thinking about this, it was too late. Multinational cola companies had already monopolised all available market space. Those were days of benign competitive coexistence with brands such as Rogers, Nusserwanjee and Bliss. True, Coke entered the market in 1954 followed in 1964 by Pepsi, but at that point neither multinational posed a problem; the market simply expanded and everyone sold to capacity. Consumer dynamics too were simpler; the kind of segmentation that exists today was non-existent then. Pakola targeted and was equally enjoyed by the young and old in the upper- and middle-income groups. It was the great Pakistani family drink. But all this was about to change.

THE COLA WARS

In 1979, Pepsi decided it was time to up the ante and establish its dominance in the Pakistan carbonated drinks market. To this end, it offered its bottling franchise to the Teli family and to avoid conflicts of interest, a new company, Mehran Bottlers (Pvt) Limited, was formed to service the Pakola brand (as well as the Bubble Up and Apple Sidra franchises that were held by the family), while Pakistan Beverages exclusively handled the bottling franchise for Pepsi. If it was Pakola vs Pespi, it was also Teli vs Teli.

Armed with the experience of breaking into and capturing new markets, wielding huge marketing budgets, and sophisticated branding strategies, the American colas, set about establishing their dominion with barely a passing glance at Pakola. To each company, the only competitor was the other; Coca Cola was routed and to this day Pepsi is the dominant carbonated

drink in the country. Pepsi advertising took over the print media, cluttered the electronic media and ruled the billboards across Pakistan. The brand muscled its way into retail outlets, providing expensive coolers to keep its bottles chilled, and through policies of retail incentives succeeded in stifling any kind of competition from the shops. Schools and restaurants similarly found themselves 'persuaded' to serve only Pepsi. Pepsi became the taste of a new generation.

THE FIGHT AGAINST OBLITERATION

Despite the ferocity of the onslaught, the Seth's vanilla, chocolate and rose water drink refused to go completely away. But its golden days were over. From the eighties onwards, the demand for black carbonated drinks started to climb, capturing a seventy per cent market share, with about fifteen per cent going to the white carbonated drinks and leaving a fifteen per cent window to 'other' fizzy beverages, to which Pakola was relegated.

In the face of a local market gone awry, Pakola started looking outside, to Pakistani expatriates (mostly from Karachi) for whom Pakola held fond memories of home. But this first required innovation. Mehran Bottlers set about installing a state-of-the-art can- and bottle-filling plant, thus enabling them to enter the can as well as the polythylene terephthalate[i] (PET) bottle market. Pakola began to seek out new niche markets in North America, the United Kingdom and the Middle East, as well as certain African countries, Australia and New Zealand. At home, Pakola maintained its presence, mainly through the PET bottles.[ii]

At home there was another victory to be savoured. Perhaps frustrated by their inability to obliterate Pakola, Pepsi and Coke launched their own version of a green ice cream soda: Pepsi with Miranda Green, and Coke with Green Fanta. Both failed miserably, and the Pakola ice cream soda stood its ground. The winning formula belonged to Pakola.

But above all else what saved Pakola from oblivion was the strong branding and marketing legacy left by Seth Haji Muhammad Ali Teli (the Pakola-Patriotism-Pakistan link), and it was to this legacy that his successors would return, time and time again, in order to reinforce the brand and engender top-of-mind recall *(Figure 4)*. And times having changed, the approach became more subtle. Hence in the late eighties, the theme went: *Hara, Hara Pakola* (Green, Green Pakola) campaign.

By that time consumer segmentation had become a factor brands could not ignore, and following the example of Pepsi and Coke, the *Hara Hara Pakola* campaign was moving away from a family drink, positioning into one that targeted the young. However, from the eighties onwards, the fizz went out of Pakola. To an extent, this can be attributed to the aggressive high-budget marketing strategies from the Pepsi and Coke camps, but this is only part of the story. Pakola was not the only national company to find itself at the receiving end of big-budget multinational competition; yet

i. Thermoplastic polymer resin of the polyester family used for making liquid containers.

ii. According to the company, this was the first bottling plant in South Asia to receive ISO 9001, ISO 140001, and RVA HACCP certifications.

4.

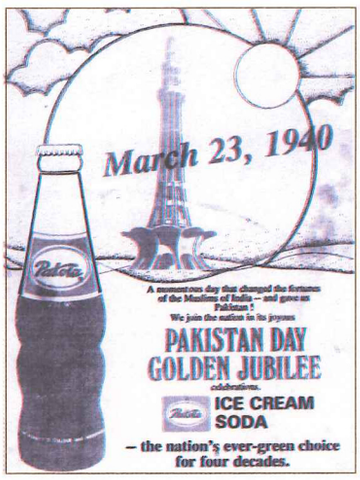


Figure 4. Press advertisement celebrating the golden jubilee of Pakistan Day. In the background is the Minar-e Pakistan, in Lahore, a monument commemorating the Lahore Resolution, passed on 23 March 1940, demanding a separate homeland for Muslims.

many managed to weather the storm. A case in point is Tapal Tea, a company, which despite intense competition from Unilever's Lipton Yellow Label and Brooke Bond teas, established itself as the number two brand in the market after Lipton Yellow Label, completely sidelining Brooke Bond.

What seems to have happened is that the Teli family became involved in a number of other business ventures, not least the Pepsi bottling franchise. The focus moved away from Pakola.

RISE OF THE YOUNG SETH

The Seth's legacy could yet be saved by his grandson—Seth Zeeshan Habib who took over as CEO of Mehran Bottlers in 2004. He seems determined to return the brand to some of its former glory. However, he is hamstrung by a market now totally Pepsi-dominated, and by a shoestring marketing budget. When he took control of the company, seven years had elapsed since Pakola had done any advertising. One of the last ads released was in the newspaper *Dawn* in 1997 on 23 March (Pakistan Resolution Day) which simply stated: 'The Great Green Flag. The Great Green Drink'.

In seeking to revive Pakola's flagging fortunes, Zeeshan Habib has renewed the communication link between his brand and the public. Keenly aware that his marketing budget is modest, he has opted to work with a small agency which has come up with *Dil Bola Pakola* (Heart says Pakola). The catchy tagline and the bold uncluttered visuals have gone some way towards reinvigorating the brand's image and moving the Pakola sales up *(Figures 5, 6&7)*.

So will the young Seth take Pakola back to the glory days of his grandfather's time? Working in his favour is the fact that Pakola's alignment as the Pakistani Cola is still remembered by many, giving the brand significant amounts of residual goodwill. The problem is that time is running out and this could change within a generation. To turn the brand around, some radical measures and a few financial risks will need to be taken. The company will have to break away from the mould of a traditional 'seth' establishment, and hardcore professionals will need to be inducted in the management. Also, new and exciting product extensions will have to be planned. In addition to large doses of imagination, expertise, finances, focus, commitment and nerves of steel (to spend all that money and stay the course), Zeeshan will, above all else, need belief in the product. Belief that he carries the legacy of a great Pakistani brand.

EPILOGUE—INCIDENTALLY GREEN

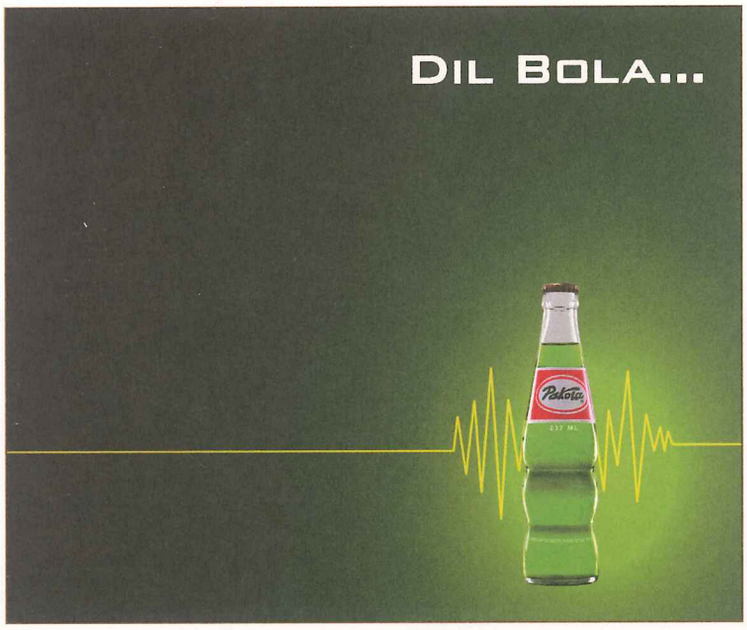
Forty years have elapsed since I first returned to Karachi and made acquaintance with that green drink. Were it left to me, I would love to re-launch Pakola as the ice cream soda 'Vintage' using the original bottle, and make 'back to the fifties and sixties' my theme—a time when everything seemed possible in Pakistan. I would evoke all those icons, and symbols that made us 'Proud to be Pakistani', and associate them with the Pakola Vintage, starting with the PTV dramas that made us the envy of our Indian neighbours and going back to the times when PIA really did us proud. I would perhaps take a clip of a kerchief-throated Waheed Murad dancing playfully around a tree, of Noor Jehan pouring her heart out, of Fazal Mahmood taking wickets like no one else quite could. Focusing on bouffant hairdos, *kameezes* (local shirts) with darts and bell-bottoms with outlandish flares.

In addition to the Vintage, another option could be to launch Pakola 'Modern', adapting the formula (and taste) to what a new generation of consumers might want, and link it with some of the things that define the present generation—malls, iPods, talk shows, mobile phones, coffee shops, *kurtis*, rock bands, music, lawn, gyms, FM radio stations... The culmination of all this would be an extension of the original message. 'The Great Green Flag. The Great Green Drink' would turn into something subtler, and perhaps more connected to the mindset of today's Pakistani consumer. 'Pakola—the drink that makes us feel good about ourselves.'

But flights of fantasy aside, Pakola's ice cream soda is still bought by thousands of Pakistani consumers for whom the taste cannot be substituted by any other drink; a drink, with a formula and a taste that so perfectly matches the local consumer's ideal of the perfect cold drink. And that is the genius of Pakola's success.

The colour, of course, was always incidental.

5.



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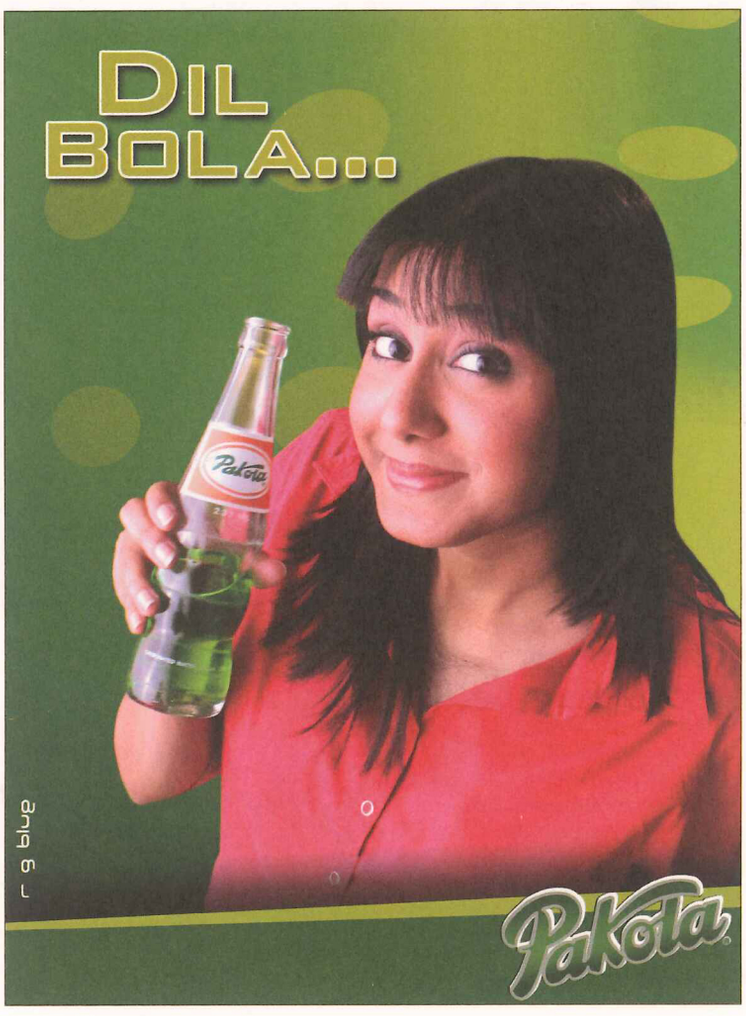

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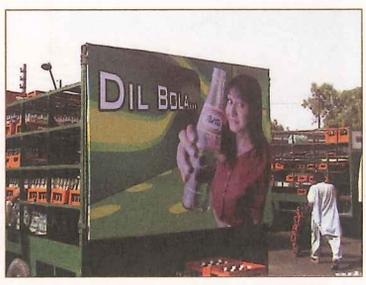

Figures 5, 6&7. 'Dil Bola Pakola' (Heart Says Pakola), an advertising campaign launched in 2006, designed by RG Blue.

Figure 7 shows the advertisement mounted on the back of the supplies truck loaded with crates of Pakola bottles.

1.

PIA engineering–the highest standards anywhere

All airline maintenance standards are strict. That's why flying today is so safe. At PIA workshops scientists and engineers are trained in the highly sophisticated skills of equipment care. Such is the emphasis and pride which PIA places on its own high operational standards. Standards which have enabled this young and vigorous airline to cut delays for engineering reasons from 3.1% to 2.1% during the last five years—so that today, not only has PIA established an enviable reputation for maintenance and punctuality, but travellers the world over say PIA are great people to fly with.

PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

GREAT PEOPLE TO FLY WITH

CHINA PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN MIDDLE EAST USSR EUROPE UK

BRAND TAKE-OFF
Pakistan International Airlines

VISUAL CONTRIBUTOR: ABBAS ALI
ESSAY: FARAZ MAQSOOD HAMIDI

London, 1975. In the early hours of the morning, a silver Porsche Carrera turns the corner from Piccadilly and shoots past Park Lane. Richard Negus is late—he has an appointment with an executive group from a dynamic 28-year-old country, the airline of which is ranked among the global top ten. The group is on a mission: to commission one among dozens of British agencies to implement a simple design strategy and create the world's greatest airline identity. The deadline? Yesterday. The airline? Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

Initially, when corporations commissioned an identity, no one looked beyond the development of a logo/logotype, which was meant to be functional, aid recall, reinforce brand loyalty and add value to the customer experience. But as modern communication evolved, the context and environment of the logotype began to matter. The branding experience is stretched by corporate identities that are designed to inspire confidence, fuel choices and build businesses. Of course, the true test of a logotype is its effectiveness when invisible, when its identity takes over. In other words, if we can recognise an entire advertisement, environment, manner or internal culture as belonging to a specific brand without the physical endorsement of that brand's logotype, only then can it claim success. As a result, today's powerful logotypes define who we are—the audience and consumers of communication design—and what we wish to experience.

Karachi, 1974. Arif Ali Khan Abbasi, who went on to become a three-time Managing Director of PIA, is beginning to understand the importance of a corporate and visual identity for the airline. Since its visual inception in 1955, the airline had been repeatedly subjected to an array of paint jobs prescribed by managerial opinion rather than any professional, strategic insight. Sure, the green-and-white visual was an obvious choice. But if PIA were to have a new identity, it would have to encapsulate the dynamic, young nation's notion of itself, not only in the world media but also in the consciousness of the passenger.

Enter, Negus. Adjusting his camera to capture the late afternoon light, Negus zooms in on the tailfin of

Figure 1. (Left) An advertisement for the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). Printed in 'Mirror' monthly magazine, June 1966 issue (Vol XVI), issued from Karachi.

The advertisement shows the maintenance staff working on a PIA aircraft. In the lower portion, next to the image of the air stewardess, is the famous slogan 'Great People to Fly with' which was coined by the advertising legend Leo Burnett, which replaced PIA's old slogan 'the airline for top flight service'.

Pakistan International Airlines, the national flag carrier airline flew its first service on 7 June 1954 on the route linking Karachi and Dacca (now Dhaka), the main cities of the country's western and eastern halves (the latter is now Bangladesh). The airline flew its first international service on 1 February 1955, between Karachi and London via Cairo.

**The visual contribution chronicles certain aspects of the brand identity of PIA since its inception. Not all the images are mentioned in the essay.*

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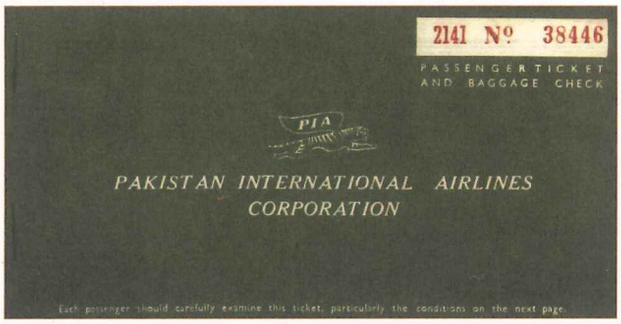
3.



4.

5.

Figure 2. An advertisement promoting the airline's first international service, Karachi to London via Cairo, launched on 1 February 1955. Printed in 'Vision' magazine's 'Anniversary Number', 1955.

Figure 3. The cover of a passenger ticket. Issued by the PIA Peshawar office for flight PK-303 from Peshawar to Lahore on 27 March 1956. Total fare Rs 57.

Figure 4. A postage stamp with first-day cover issued by the Pakistan Posts and Telegraphs Department to celebrate the first jet-service of PIA between Karachi and Dacca on 6 February 1962. It is a 13 paisa overprint in red on a 2½ paisa stamp issued in 1955 which depicts a Boeing 720-B Jetliner.

Figure 5. A postage stamp with first-day cover issued by the Pakistan Post Office to commemorate the 'Pearl Route Inaugural' PIA flight service between Dacca and Tokyo on 1 November 1969.

Figure 6. A green and white vintage luggage label from the 1950s, showing the earliest logo design of the winged Bengal tiger with the initials PIA written in bold slab serif type. It is gummed at the back like the postage stamps.

Figure 7. A colourful PIA luggage label (sticker) from early 1970s, depicting the san serif logo with a small illustration of an airplane cutting across the letters.

Figure 8. A luggage label in the bottle-green and gold combination from the late 1970s, featuring the logo designed by a Chinese calligrapher at Negus & Negus in 1976. The designer paired Urdu and Roman letters, forging an exemplary typographic marriage between the East and West.

Figure 9. PIA International Time Table, 1992.

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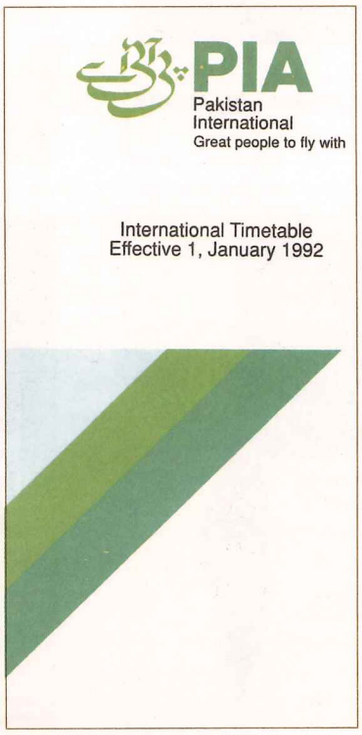


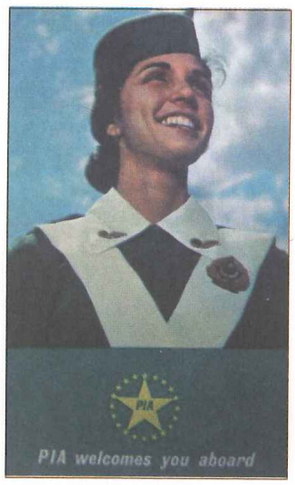
a PIA aircraft docked at Charles de Gaulle International Airport, Paris, in 1975. His firm, Negus and Negus—a husband-and-wife team also responsible for the all-blue British Airways identity—had won the pitch. In his eight-page prognosis, a design strategy document as economical as his fee,[i] Negus spoke of a marriage between technical and visual efficiencies, about matching the image to the product. More importantly, perhaps, he pointed out how corporate identities could save businesses money—after all, a different carpet in every plane costs the airline more than having the same carpet run throughout. Not surprisingly, the board was sold. Over the next few weeks, Negus shot over 2000 photographs of PIA aircraft docked at various global airports. He knew that he was branding much more than a fleet of aircraft—he was branding a nation that had only recently shed blood for a corner of the sky.

Karachi 1976. In a feat of cultural orchestration, PIA's identity was launched on 7 April 1976. The bottle-green and gold combination resonated across the country and earned adulation from across the globe *(Figure 8)*. Technically, the new logotype was deemed a success as the airline was recognised as 'the most visible tail in the world', a record it still holds. The newly christened Pakistan International dropped the Airlines from its name—but not its initials—and pioneered a new chapter in aviation branding by raising itself from a commodity to an experience. As the country's most visible icon, the PIA fleet radiated two strategic messages: Pakistan International is an international carrier while Pakistan is an international country.

Of course, the story of PIA's identity search would not be complete without mention of its use of the Urdu script: those distinctive, golden rivers of genius. Given that PIA was the first non-communist airline to fly to China, the script, aptly enough, is an iconic testament to Sino-Pak relations as it was designed by a Chinese calligrapher at Negus and Negus with no knowledge of Urdu or Arabic calligraphy. On his third attempt, the designer paired Urdu and Roman letters, forging an exemplary typographic marriage between the East and the West and evoking the modernity and internationalism that the airline stood for *(Figures 8&9)*. Equally remarkable were the script's euphony and placement. More importantly, the script was not an afterthought: it was at the heart of the airline's identity, appearing before its Roman equivalent.

i. Negus and Negus was commissioned at 250,000 pounds for developing the new corporate identity for PIA.

10–11.



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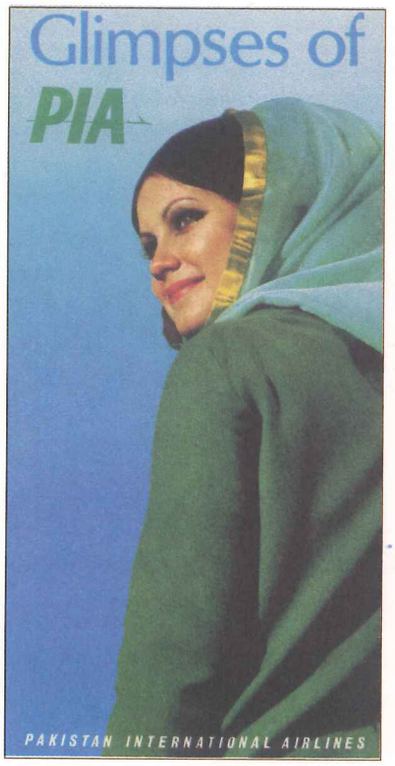

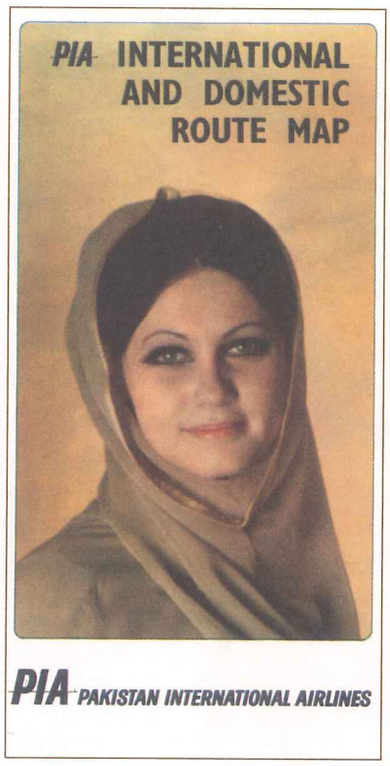

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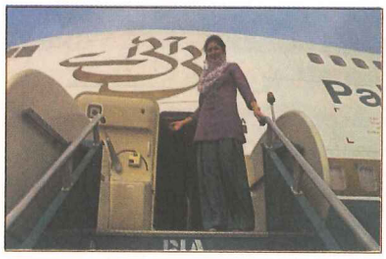
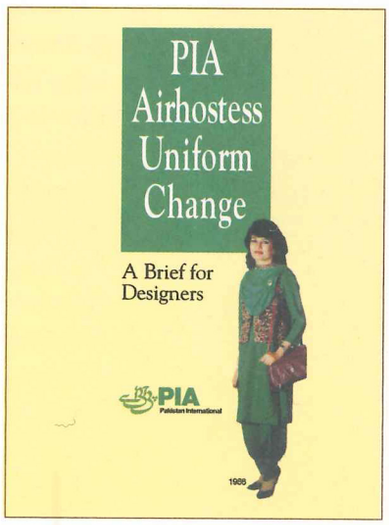
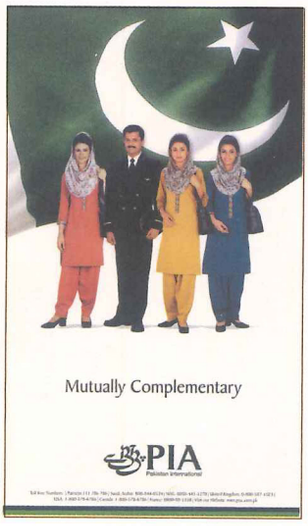






UNIFORM OF THE PIA FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

PIA commissioned famous national and international fashion designers to create the uniforms worn by its flight attendants.

Figure 10. Cover of PIA First Class cabin seat back booklet, 1960.

Air Hostess Selma Sheikh wearing the uniform designed by Chausée Fontaingnelle who was with the PIA on a five-year deputation from Pan Am. It comprised a white shalwar and dupatta, set off by a green shirt with white cuffs and collar, along with a green cap. Shoes and bags were black. This uniform was in use from 1955 to 1960.

Figure 11. A leaflet published to advertise the commemorative postage stamp issued on the first jet flight service between Karachi and Dacca. The PIA air hostess is wearing the uniform designed by Mr Feroze Cowasji of Pakistan who introduced minor changes to the earlier version, the most obvious being the further abbreviation of the slim-folded dupatta. This uniform design was in use from 1960 to 1966.

Figures 12–14. The uniform designed by Pierre Cardin.

'In 1966, the most colourful, if not the most significant, happening took place when a new uniform for PIA air hostesses was designed by the renowned French designer Pierre Cardin. This, more than any other singular factor, imprinted PIA's name on the international market. It took the aviation world by storm. The uniform was an instant hit, both in Pakistan and in the countries visited by PIA airliners'.
The summer uniform was moss green and turquoise (Figure 12, cover of Route Map) while in winter, fawn and orange (Figure 13, cover of 'Glimpses of PIA'). It consisted of a short, easy-fitting 'A' line tunic, slim-line trousers (dubbed the 'PIA pajamas') and an imaginatively moulded dupatta. In fact, the new uniform design was highlighted in an advertisement (Figure 14) which includes the query: 'Like the new uniform Cardin designed for me?' This popular uniform was in use from 1966 to 1975.

Figure 15. Postcard issued by PIA in the late 1970s.

British dress designer Sir Hardy Amies, best known for being dressmaker to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was responsible for the uniform designed in 1975. The purple and magenta kameezes had embroidered fronts, with green shalwars and pretty printed dupattas inspired by traditional styles. Teamed with black bags and black leather sandals, these bright uniforms introduced a cheerful note onboard PIA between 1975 and 1986.

Figure 16. The cover of a booklet 'PIA Airhostess Uniform Change—A brief for Designers' shows the uniform created by Pakistani fashion designer Nahid Azfar in 1986.

The shalwar kameez outfit was in four colours. Moss green and old rose for summer and burgundy and PIA green for winter. The winter uniform was worn with a traditional sleeveless Mughal waistcoat with a floral vine pattern. Both outfits came with matching dupattas trimmed with a braid. The bags and shoes were in burgundy, and for the winter there was a burgundy overcoat. This uniform design was in use from 1986 to 2003.

Figure 17. Advertisement with the PIA Cabin Crew members wearing the airline's current uniform. Designed by Riffat Yasmin, the new uniform was introduced in January 2004.

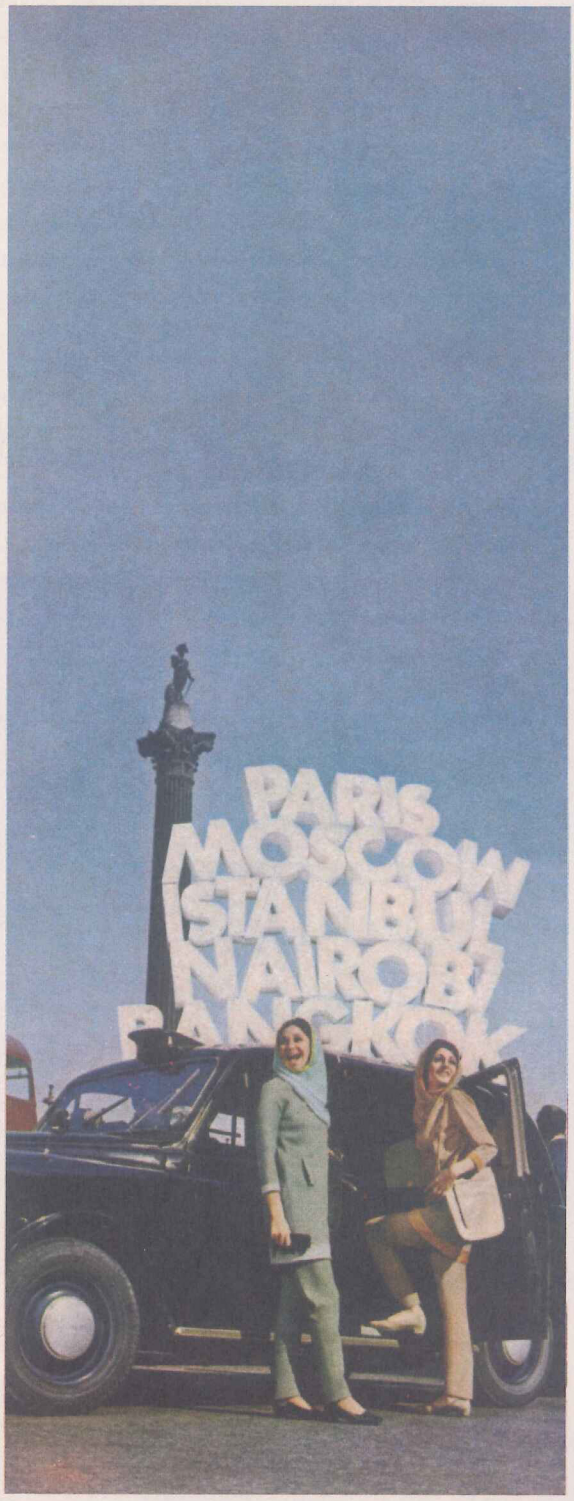
Figures 18–20. (pages 170&171) A playful attitude concentrating on destinations depicted in PIA advertisements from 1970. Printed in 'Life' magazine, Asia edition, issued from Japan between 1967 and 1969.

Karachi 1976. When PIA displayed the new identity aboard the first Boeing 747 on 1 May 1976, it was immediately clear that the airline had arranged the elements of its identity to generate collective ownership and, consequently, popular hysteria. Regional players such as Saudi, Gulf and Jordan later imitated the PIA look by using gold lettering and juxtaposing Arabic and Roman scripts. Still, the popularity of the new identity really hit home when people started peeling PIA decals off its vans and utilities.

Having established a brand identity, Negus continued to work on a number of PIA projects late into the 1970s. For instance, he remodelled PIA's SIDCO Centre Booking Office in Karachi as a prototype environment, using mirrors extensively to deflect the imposing pillars in the hall. And then, of course, there were the uniforms that came hemmed with controversy over the decades.

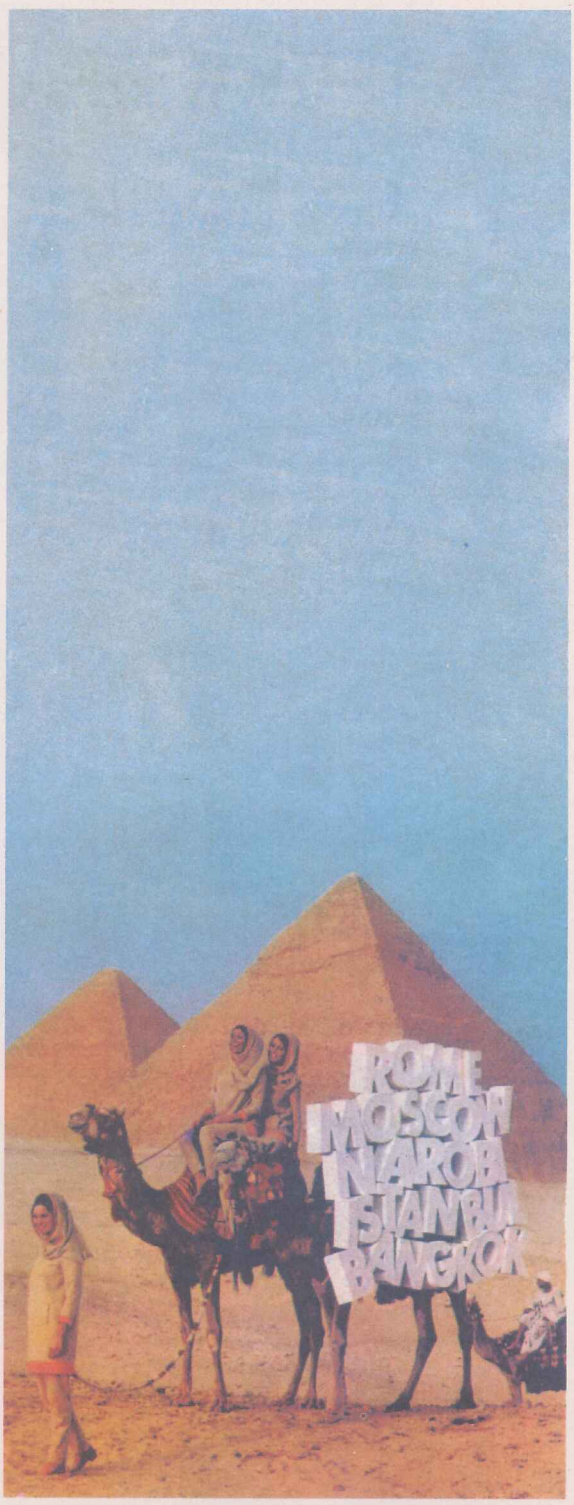
Indeed, for over half a century, PIA's uniforms have reflected the psyche of the nation. The first uniform designed in 1955 by Chausée Fontaingnelle, a PAN AM hostess on deputation to PIA, had hostesses donning a beret with militarised elegance meant to signal a new wave of independence for both the nation and her newly empowered women *(Figure 10)*. This was followed by another classic: the legendary, hooded tunic and straight pants, dubbed the PIA pajamas, by Pierre Cardin *(Figures 12–14)*. Although the outfit had some design flaws, the pajamas captured the magic of the liberal, sexy swinging 1960s and sparked an international fashion statement on the runways of Paris and Milan. Sadly, in 1977, the arrival of General Ziaul Haq led to the Islamisation of the uniform and the adoption of the dupatta. Negus decided that there had to be a stylish way to work around the fundamentalism. In partnership with Sir Hardy Amies, the Queen's designer since 1951, he initiated an aesthetic change that worked around the limitations of a standard shalwar kameez. Instead of sticking to staple greens, creams and whites, Negus and Amies introduced an array of vivid contrasts—purples, magentas, bottle-greens, golds—and, for the first time, replaced solid colours with delicate prints and embroidery *(Figure 15)*. The idea was to have a 'multiform'—as opposed to a uniform—so that an air of informality could pervade the flight's atmosphere in a remarkably subtle gesture of defiance against the sociopolitical straitjacket that confined the country. This pioneering concept also aimed to highlight each crewmember's individuality without compromising the look of the team. The current Princess Line uniform, designed locally during Negus'

18–19.



PIA has the best places:
CAIRO · LONDON · FRANKFURT · GENEVA · PARIS
BEIRUT · BAGHDAD · KUWAIT · DHAHRAN
TEHRAN · KARACHI · KABUL · DACCA
KATHMANDU · CANTON · SHANGHAI · DOHA
DUBAI · BAHRAIN · JEDDAH

PIA PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES



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KATHMANDU · CANTON · SHANGHAI · DOHA
DUBAI · BAHRAIN · JEDDAH

PIA PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

ABBAS ALI & FARAZ MAQSOOD HAMIDI

20.

PIA has the best places:
CAIRO · LONDON · FRANKFURT · GENEVA · PARIS
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TEHRAN · KARACHI · KABUL · DACCA
KATHMANDU · CANTON · SHANGHAI · DOHA
DUBAI · BAHRAIN · JEDDAH

PIA PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

second innings at PIA in 1989, also stems from the Negus-Amies fitting collaboration *(Figure 17)*.

Much like the uniforms, the airline's logotype, and thus brand identity, also had to evolve with time. The fact was, the aspirations and excesses of the 1980s seemed well-poised to be replaced by meaningful concerns, such as Feng Shui and antioxidant-heavy diets. Negus probably realised that his 1976 design for PIA was admirably representative of the material 1980s opulent aesthetic. But as the decade moved towards a leaner and more environmentally friendly era and people began to see through the broadcast culture of traditional marketing tactics, Negus wanted to strum cultural chords and repeat his earlier success with an updated, new platform. For PIA's new identity to work, it needed a visual proposition that could rise above traditional banners and communicate something that design and advertising industries aren't quite famous for: substance. That identity platform was sport. And for an inner-directed, budget-friendly £50,000, Negus was hired to play a new game in 1989.

For starters, Negus chose to get rid of the gold on the airline's livery. The famous green and gold were replaced by 'sporty' hues in citrus and moss greens. Turquoise was injected into the colour palette as evidence of PIA's representation, active participation and sponsorship of national sports. In fact, PIA's new brand identity was actively athletic rather than merely aesthetic. In the 1980s, seven out of ten world squash champions—including the legendary Jahangir Khan *(Figure 27)*—carried PIA employee cards. Not surprisingly, the national carrier was dubbed 'The Squash Airline' within the industry—and we haven't even touched cricket and hockey yet.

Meanwhile, someone at PIA dropped the 'International' from the logotype imprinted on aircraft. The then Managing Director instructed Negus to paint over the redundancy and cut to the edge, a single-handed achievement that was far more difficult than it sounds. What initially appeared to be the blunder of the decade soon paid off. With just 'Pakistan' inscribed on the upper fuselage, PIA set a trend that other airlines—American, British, Emirates and Malaysian—imitated.

Of course, the PIA ethos could not have been complete without a holistic advertising approach. Luckily, those in charge of crafting campaigns for the carrier have been consistently sharp, sensitive, sincere and spunky. The giant of advertising, Leo Burnett—who made Marlboro a universal brand—kicked off this tradition of magical marketing by scribbling a memorable piece

of communication for PIA that is as current today as it was in the 1950s, when he was hired. Burnett gave PIA the magnificent and magnanimous slogan, 'Great people to fly with.'

Admittedly, the iconic slogan is shrouded in mystery as wizards everywhere lay claim to its origin. But it seems that the words were coined by Burnett as a throwaway phrase that he just happened to make. More important, though, is the fact that the slogan has never changed. And why should it? There are no puns or double entendres and the words do not exude a whiff of a sales pitch. It's memorable, relevant, original and timeless. Like any classic, it is nostalgic yet current. Functional yet inspiring. For the travelling public, the words are a captivating index—as democratic as they are brief—into the cultural topography of a diverse civilization. For the company, on the other hand, the slogan is an underlined conscience. Tucked neatly beneath the logotype, it is a constant reminder of what PIA has to live up to and what its credibility rests on. As such, it's the slogan of our nation.

The resilience of the 'Great people to fly with' slogan demonstrates the power of a big idea. Armed with that catchphrase, subsequent advertisers and marketing gurus had to think big too. In the 1970s, the necessity of extending the new corporate and visual identity into advertising led to the hiring of London's Ogilvy and Mather. Sharing his legendary reputation with the PIA account, David Ogilvy ensured that his agency scored with its classic proposition, 'It's just like coming home' *(Figures 33–35)*. PIA also scored from the relationship, becoming one of the few organisations in the world to hold a signed copy of *Confessions of an Advertising Man* by the legend himself.

While Ogilvy and Mather exposed PIA's growing network, Saatchi and Saatchi was hired in 1990 to do the extraordinary. The magic started in the white-washed corridors of No. 2, Clifton Road, Karachi, home of the notable International Advertising Limited (IAL), PIA's in-house agency founded in the late 1960s. IAL was responsible to a board of directors, was part of the PIA holdings, was not subject to the whims of family ownership and was thus professional. IAL Executive Director, Naseer Haider and ace Client Services Manager Sarmad Ali were sent by PIA on a mission to get the Saatchi affiliation or shut down. Seeing the onslaught of international agency networks making a beeline for Pakistan, Saatchi signed on the dotted line. And then, in sauntered Linda Locke, Regional Chairperson, Saatchi and Saatchi, Singapore, in the position of the account's Creative Director. Not only did Locke win the pitch but she also snagged a host of international awards for the world-class Birds campaign, in which each immaculately art directed advertisement proved that 'you're flying with extraordinary people' when you choose PIA *(Figures 36–38)*.

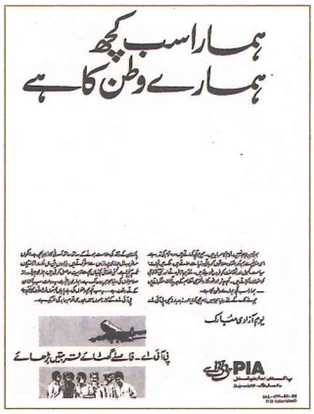
The Birds campaign was another feather in the Saatchi cap and ruffled the complacency of airline advertising by departing radically from communications which formerly bordered on the cute and kitschy. Saatchi and Saatchi made a 'single-minded proposition come alive in a compelling way', as per the agency's global creative mantra, and promoted PIA beyond the context of destination advertising. As a result, the agency's campaign elevated the PIA brand to staggering, new heights. Admittedly, domestic communications for PIA rarely reflected the finesse Saatchi and Saatchi delivered internationally, and throughout the late 1980s and

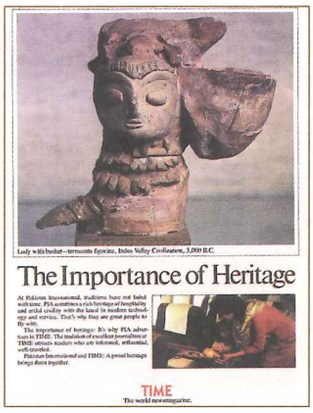
Figures 21–28. These advertisements were designed by International Advertising Limited (IAL) Saatchi and Saatchi, PIA's in-house agency founded in the late 1960s in Karachi.

The themes suffused with nationalistic pride, cover culture, heritage and historic sites. Figures 21&22 are ads printed in Urdu and English for local and international viewership, respectively. Figure 23 highlights 'The Importance of Heritage' by displaying a terracotta figurine from the Indus Valley Civilization. Figures 24&25 focus on the architectural monuments, Badshahi Mosque and Lahore Fort, and Figure 26 on the tradition of carpet weaving in the country. Figures 27–29 celebrate the sports in which Pakistanis excelled such as squash, hockey and cricket. In fact, in the 1980s, seven out of ten world squash champions, including Jahangir Khan (Figure 27) were employed by the airline which led to PIA being referred to as the 'The Squash Airline'. Figure 29 is an advertisement which appeared in a British sports magazine in the 1980s; the PIA Airbus in green and gold livery can be observed through the wicket.

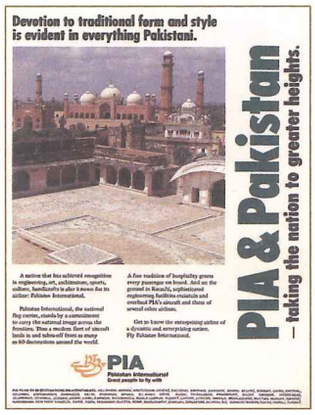
Figures 30–32 show the design of different tailfins over the years.

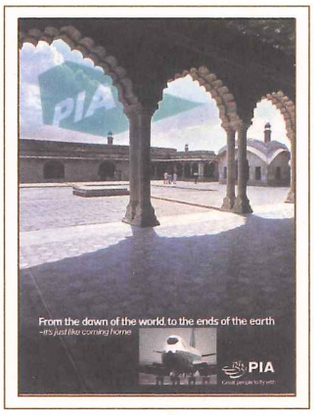
21–23.



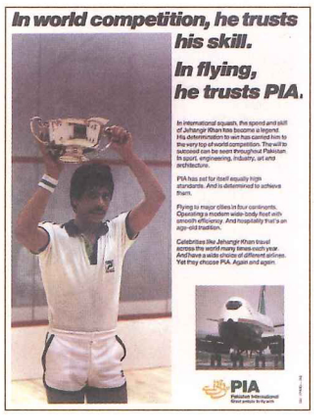


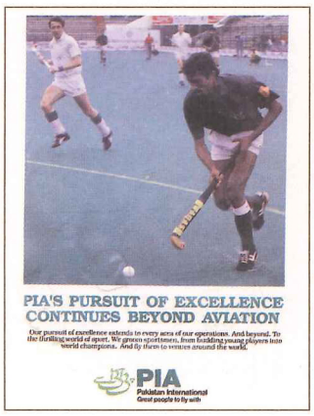
24–26.

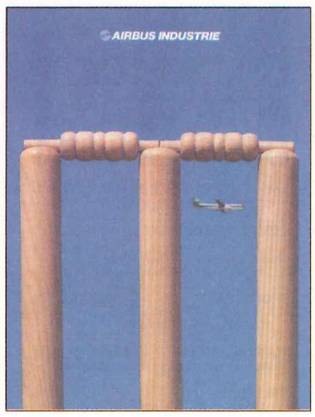




27–29.







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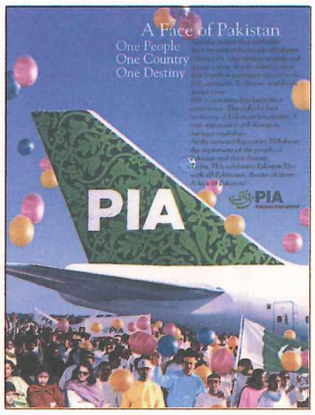

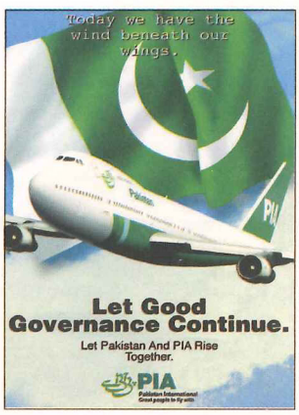

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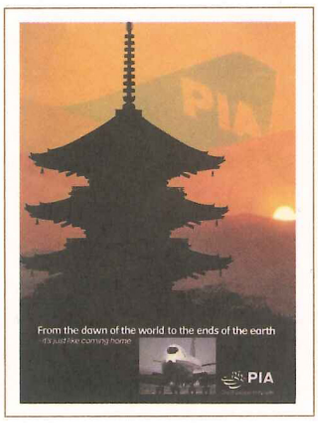
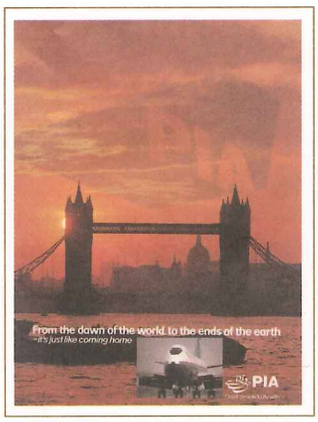
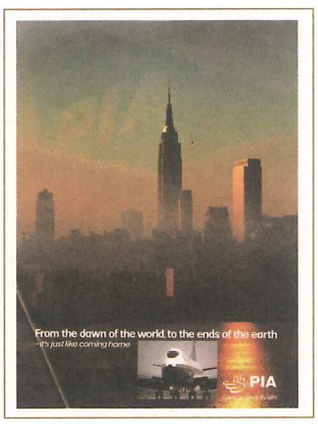
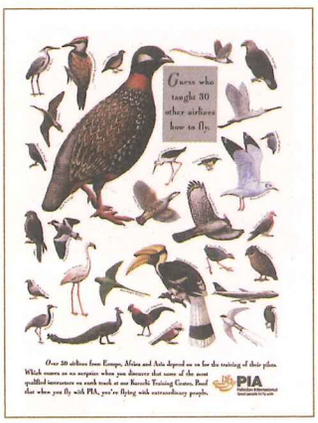
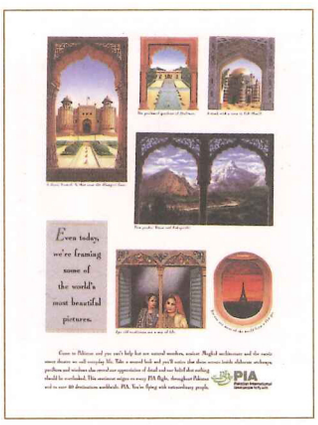




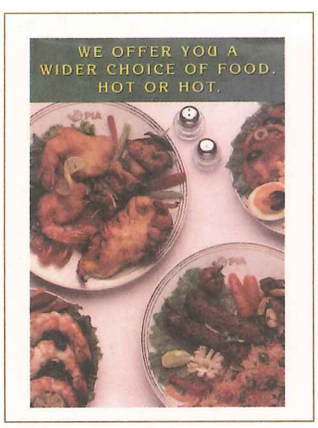


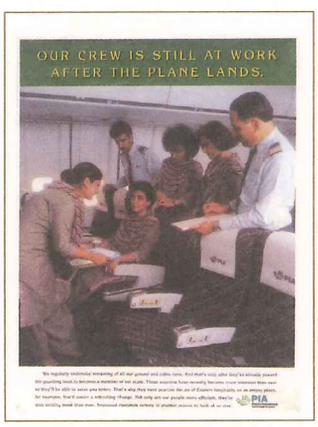
36–38.

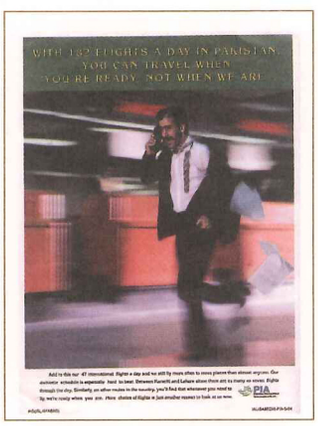




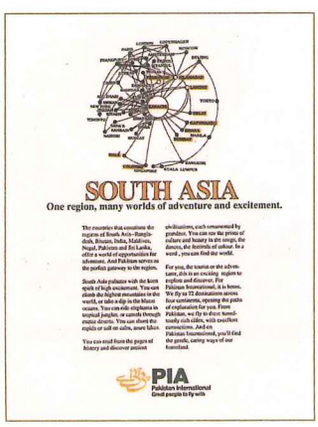
39–41

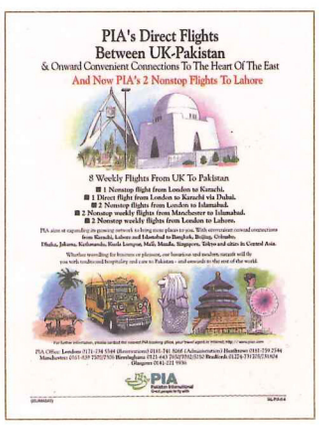


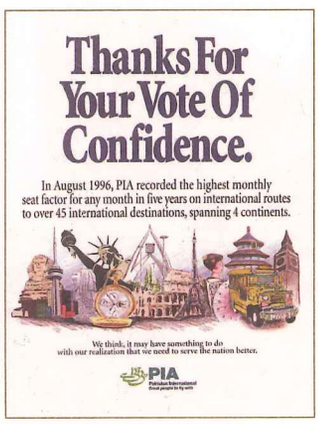




42–44







Figures 33–35. The campaign 'It's just like coming home' designed in the 1970s, by Ogilvy and Mather, London.

Figures 36–38. The famous 'Birds campaign' with the tagline 'you're flying with extraordinary people' was art directed by Linda Locke, Saatchi and Saatchi, in the 1990s.

The body copy for the advertisement (Figure 38) from 1994 reads: 'Come to Pakistan and you can't help but see natural wonders, ancient Mughal architecture and the exotic street theatre we call everyday life. Take a second look and you'll notice that these scenes inside elaborate archways, pavilions and windows also reveal our appreciation of detail and our belief that nothing should be overlooked. This sentiment reigns on every PIA flight, throughout Pakistan and to over 80 destinations worldwide. PIA. You're flying with extraordinary people'.

Figures 39–41. The 'Look at us now' campaign, which emphasised the airlines new advancements such as hot meals and regular training. Art Direction by Linda Locke, Saatchi and Saatchi, 1990s.

Figures 42–44. Advertisements from the late 1990s, focusing on destination travel by International Advertising Limited (IAL), Saatchi and Saatchi.

Figure 45. 'Emergency Instructions' for the passengers in the PIA aircraft.

1990s, local branding was a florid debacle of bad taste and poor judgement.

In the 1990s, there were new challenges afoot. As PIA's revered standards cracked to reveal an arthritic organisation beneath a rapidly thinning veneer of quality, a campaign was commissioned to reassert PIA as a contender for international passenger traffic. In the boardroom, Locke argued that owing to PIA's various service categories ranking below average, her team would deliver a campaign that seemed believable. After all, nothing kills a brand faster than false promises. Saatchi and Saatchi's last-ditch effort resulted in the 'Look at us now' campaign, which plugged the airline's proposed new advancements such as hot meals and regular training *(Figures 39–41)*. Although the television commercial Locke proposed was never produced, it effectively showed the arresting image of 400 passengers flying among the clouds in the seating arrangement of a Boeing 747. The technique, she suggested, was to let consumers absorb the narration highlighting the airline's strengths before the brand name was disclosed.

Although the 'Look at us now' campaign ran at home and abroad to the delight of loyal customers, it stands today as an ironic watermark for a sinking brand. In spite of the campaign's pragmatism, the airline did not deliver, plagued as it was with negated possibilities, quixotic vendettas and menacing mediocrity. Today, PIA's advertising continues to be sketchy and half-hearted as all communications aim to conceal the airline's reality. Loyalists maintain that it would only take three months to get PIA back on track. They strongly believe that if our country's most compelling icon is larger than life, then its resilience should silence the pundits of doom.

No doubt, PIA is a great brand. Unfortunately, it has all the prerequisites but no consistency. In the new millennium, PIA should unfurl the dynamics of its world-class identity and stretch them into something far less tangible but infinitely more powerful. This evolution can be achieved by a simple adjustment in the rusted mechanics of perspective. By 'designing' its people and services—that is, its attitude—just as it would a seat, an in-flight entertainment programme or a frequent-flyer card, PIA can meet the needs and preferences of its customers, who will return to the airline to uphold a lifestyle, a loyalty, a legacy. After all, local brands are built on the basis of emotional patronage—if we can be made to patronise all things Pakistani, then there's no reason not to look twice at the airline.

Thank you for flying Pakistan International.

45.

1.

TO LET?
Billboards in the Urban Environment

ARIF HASAN

Major social and economic changes have taken place in the world in the last fifteen years. The politics of neo-liberalism has imposed a culture of globalisation, and in order to ensure its sustainability has led to the development of international institutions and covenants (such as the World Trade Organization). The soft face of capitalism, as embodied in the concept of the welfare state, has been wiped out by the 'market economy' and has allowed capital and technology to move across national boundaries. As a result, the international corporate sector has become more powerful than many states. Through the internationally promoted structural adjustment, poorer countries have been forced to become a part of this larger global economy and subservient to its institutions and interest. These immense changes have led to the development of a consumer culture which spawns a global market. A host of products and services need to be promoted. Given the financial stakes, these forms of advertising are visible to the urban populace even if the promoted products remain unaffordable for the majority in developing countries such as ours.

Advertising options have emerged to meet this demand for effective marketing. The most aggressive forms of outdoor advertising, seen across cities, are the billboards. Interestingly, this consumer culture is viewed as a mark of progress by some economists and social scientists. The government, too, sees rampant consumerism as a sign of progress, cites the increase in the number of cars and mobile phones as a sign of prosperity (these two commodities being among the most frequently advertised). Others, however, view it as a social evil that consolidates the rich–poor divide, promoting further fragmentation of society. According to government statistics, poverty in Pakistan has increased over the last twenty years from 17.32 per cent in 1987–88 to 28 per cent in 2005–2006 CE. In addition, there have been major cutbacks on subsidies on education, health and housing in the last fifteen years as a result of structural adjustment.

All this despite the fact that there has never been more liquidity in banks and insurance companies in Pakistan's history. In 2006, economic growth was eight per cent

Figure 1. Refugees, left homeless after the 8 October earthquake in 2005, set up camp using recycled advertising billboards as rain covers for their tents in the city of Muzaffarabad, Kashmir, in the north of Pakistan (31 October 2005).

David Guttenfelder © AP Images.

against a population growth of 1.8 per cent. Therefore, one is forced to ask as to where the growth benefits were utilized if not in social housing, health and education. To return to the example of automobiles or 'hire-purchase' loans, it is estimated that over five hundred cars per day in Karachi and two hundred cars per day in Islamabad were registered during the financial year 2004–2005. Thus Rs 153 trillion (US$2.55 trillion) were spent on the purchase of cars alone. If government policies had been aimed at promoting equity and justice, these funds could have been utilized for the development of social sector facilities and programmes.

In keeping with the enormous demand for global advertising, the largest billboards are those erected by multinational companies, often in the most prominent spots. Ironically, these huge and well-lit billboards—that continue to gleam in cities plagued with power failures—promote a way of life that contrasts sharply with the old and dilapidated buildings on which they are raised. As such, they may even provoke a sense of social conflict and alienation.

Billboards have an adverse effect on the physical and social environment as well as on traffic safety. They are usually located along the centre of the road on dual carriageways, at roundabouts, intersections and bus stops, on buildings, and in open public spaces, including parks and playgrounds. Above all, they are unattractive and blemish the cityscape. They are most suffocating for those who live in buildings that sport such advertising, depriving the residents of light, air and views of the city.

There are several by-laws governing the erection of billboards which are blatantly violated. For example, billboards cannot be installed on green belts. Clause 11.5 indicates that 'no advertisement, or billboard or frame can be installed in the middle of the island dividing two roads, in between the roundabout or at the centre of the intersection. Neither can it be placed on a traffic sign, the traffic control equipment or traffic signals or very close to them.' The maximum and minimum size of billboards is also clearly identified *(see note on by-laws, page 179)*. In addition, the advertiser has to submit an engineer's certificate approving the safety of the billboard as well as a site plan.

For the most part, images that appear on billboards lack aesthetic value. The compositions are often flawed, colours are loud, and typography, mostly clumsy. Collectively speaking, they come across as a jungle of unrelated shapes, sizes and colours—a disaster in every sense of the word. Their content has frequently come under attack, as activists of religious parties with objections to the images of women promoting consumerism (equating it with the degradation of women and the promotion of obscenity) have blackened or disfigured the billboards featuring them.

More problematic is the fact that billboard supports—whether well-designed aluminium structures or steel trusses—encroach on pavements and public spaces. Their ill-chosen locations make billboards both dangerous and inconvenient, and pedestrians are often forced to walk under them or on the road. They also pose a hazard to drivers by being a source of distraction. Indeed, government officials and a number of civil society organisations have repeatedly expressed concern regarding the

REPORTS ON BILLBOARDS IN THE PRESS

Karachi: More than 17,000 billboards stand in Karachi out of which up to 13,000 are illegal, according to a study conducted by Roland D'Souza, head of Shehri, a non-government organization.
—Daily Times, 25 June 2007

Letters to the Editor

Sir: Pakistan witnessed yet another incident of faulty construction when a billboard recently fell and caused the death of an innocent child's life. It is tragic that such negligence goes unnoticed by our politicians and administrators. A few years ago, a rickshaw driver was also killed when a hoarding collapsed on him. Now that another life has been lost in a similar accident, who will take action against those responsible?
Aziz Chaudry, London
—Daily Times, 25 May 2006

Petition filed against 'killer billboards'

Karachi: The Human Safety Foundation has filed a petition with the Sindh High Court, seeking compensation for the heirs of people who were killed by billboards during the rainstorms in Karachi.

The petition seeks the enforcement of the rules and regulations for billboards and advertisement hoardings, compensation for the heirs of the victims in billboard-related deaths, electrocution and wall collapses.

The petition was filed through the foundation's authorized representative Husna Baloch who cited the chief secretary, city nazim, managing director of Cantonment Board Faisal and managing director of KESC as respondents. The petitioner maintained that 230 people died and 200 others were injured during the storm which lashed Karachi city, causing the maximum number of deaths in Gadap Town. The petitioner prayed the court to direct the respondents not to sanction or grant permission for billboards bigger than the standard size, fix compensation of one million rupees for the heirs of the victims, direct the CS and city nazim to recover the compensation money from the owners of these billboards.
(Daily Times, 10 July 2007)

Billboards be powered off by 9pm

Lahore: The Pakistan Electric Power Company (Pepco) on Wednesday decided to relaunch conservation campaign, which according to its calculation could save up to 700MW if the district governments and public cooperate. The proponents of the conservation drive maintain the company will be able to save up to 250MW on account of billboards. They say the billboards consume over 500MW in the entire country and if the authority is able to save even half of the energy, it will be saving 250MW on this head alone.
—The Daily Dawn, 1 October 2007

EXCERPTS FROM CITY DISTRICT GOVERNMENT OF KARACHI BY-LAWS GOVERNING 'TYPES OF ADVERTISEMENTS AND RELEVANT RULES'

7.4 Billboards (Big Advertisements on Structure)

Billboards would be constructed & erected under the specified standard height and restrictions of size.

Depth of Ad.	*Breadth*	*Visible Height*
15 feet	*45 feet*	*31 feet*
10 feet	*29 feet*	*21 feet*
8 feet	*12 feet*	*12 feet*

7.4.1 These would be erected at 30 to 45 degrees from the direction of flow of the traffic and their edge would be at least six feet away from the roadside.

7.4.3 When it is built or erected within a building or property then it should not come out of the limits of that property.

7.4.4 It should not be installed within 300 feet range of any bridge, ascent or descent.

7.4.6 The following conditions would apply for the erection, or construction or display of billboards:
a. On such three-or four-way intersections where traffic is controlled through traffic lights.
i. In these advertisements red, green and orange colours would not be used as the main colour;
ii. The advertisement should not in any way hamper the traffic lights or signs or make them invisible;
iii. Not more than four billboards could be installed on the sides of the three-or four-way intersections, provided the distance between them is not less than 15 feet.

b. Light: Illumination of billboards is permissible but the light should be continuous and constant. All 'off and on' lights on billboards are prohibited.

7.8 Advertisements Installed Over Roof
7.8.1 No advertising board installed on the rooftop would hinder the view of any other building nor would it hide any other legally placed advertisement board or hinder its view.
7.8.2 No advertising board for the rooftop could be placed over any private, business, welfare or public building unless the Licensing Authority under these by-laws approves it.

7.8.4 The measurement of an advertisement put on the rooftop would be as per following schedule:
Type of Building Measurement
1. Ground floor to 2nd Floor–Up to 45x15 feet
2. Top 3rd and 4th Floor–Up to 60x20 feet
3. Top 5th Floor or more–Up to 90x30 feet

Fabrication & Structural Requirements of Frames
8.1 All advertisements, structures and frames should be firmly put up as per the prescribed standards.
8.2 Durable material should be used in all advertising frames and structures.
8.3 Constant maintenance of all advertising frames and structures is necessary.

Disfiguration
No advertisement or advertising frame would be put up in front of the road or on the ground or wall or tree or any other natural scene, which could affect the natural or artificial beauty of the environment.

serious threat that the billboards pose to the life of pedestrians and commuters.

These apprehensions have been validated every year, specially during the monsoons. In fact, a number of billboards collapsed as a result of strong winds in July 2007. Articles, letters and reports issued in the press and electronic media have urged the removal of these boards by the city government. Incidentally, a major contributing factor for the prevalence of billboards remains the huge sums of money involved.[i]

Fortunately, this issue of billboards has made its presence felt, and taking note of the numerous negative associations, the Sindh provincial government has declared that the most important artery of Karachi—Shahrah-e Faisal—is to be 'billboard free'. As a first step, those billboards are being removed for which dues have not been paid to the city government. The removal of the legal billboards, on the other hand, will take place once their contract period has expired. Of course, one will have to wait and see who is more powerful—the city government or the billboard 'mafia' backed by the powerful corporate sector!

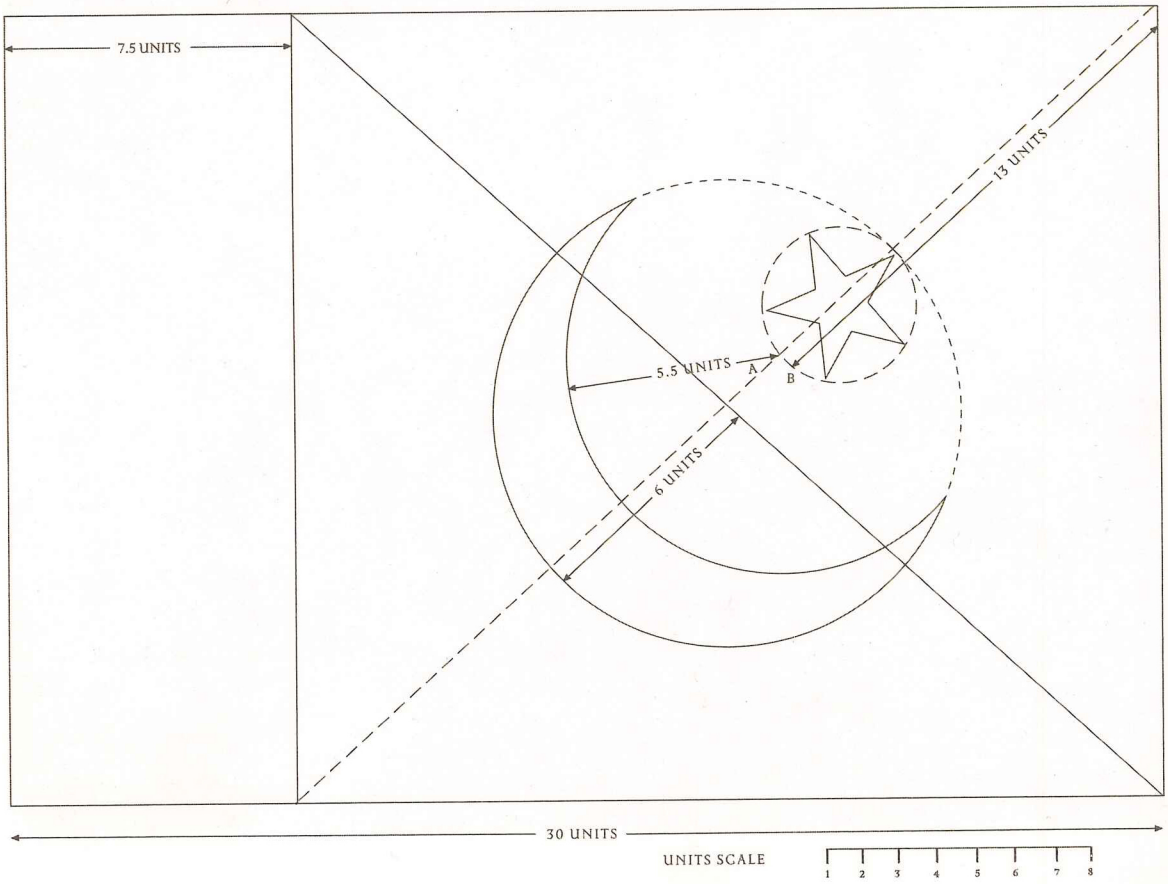
i. Ahmad Rafay Alam in 'The Problem with Billboards' (*The News, 16 April 2007*) informed the readers that the estimated income generated through billboards in Lahore was Rs 450 million annually. He went on to state that 'It isn't beyond the realm of reason to presume that the fees collected from the billboard industry throughout Pakistan is worth over a billion rupees a year'.

Pakistan Zindabad!

LONG LIVE PAKISTAN!

1.

2.


7.5 UNITS
13 UNITS
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A
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UNITS SCALE
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

BEYOND THE SYMBOLIC TO THE SIGNIFICANT

AYESHA JALAL

Figure 1. (Left above) Children holding the Pakistani flag aloft on Independence day, 2007.

Figure 2. (Left below) The Pakistani flag was designed by Ameer uddin Kidwai. The official tailor of the first flag was Master Afzal, Hussain Brothers Tailoring Shop, New Delhi.

The information regarding the design of the flag was published in a supplement to Daily Dawn, 10 August 1947. It reads:

'Dawn authoritatively learns that the design of the flag of Pakistan has been finally chosen and it will be presented to the Constituent Assembly when it meets for formal adoption. The following are the details of the flag.

A dark green rectangular flag in the proportion length to breadth of 3:2 with a white vertical bar at the mast, the green portion bearing a white crescent in the centre and a five-pointed white heraldic star. The size of white portion being one-fourth of the size of the flag nearest the mast, the remainder three-fourth being dark green. The dimensions of the crescent and the star are obtained as follows:

Draw the diagonal from the top right-hand corner to the bottom left corner of the green portion. On this diagonal, establish two points 'A' and 'B'. Point 'A' of a distance equidistant from top right- and bottom left-hand corners of the green portion, i.e. the centre of the green portion. Point 'B' at a distance from top right-hand corner to $^{13}/_{20}$ the breadth of the flag.

With centre point 'A' and radius $^{2}/_{10}$ of the flag describe the arc of a circle. With centre point 'B' and radius $^{1}/_{14}$ the breadth of the flag, describe a second arc. The enclosure made by these two arcs forms the crescent.

The dimensions of the five-pointed white heraldic star are determined by drawing circle $^{1}/_{10}$ the breadth of the flag. The circle surrounds the five point of the heraldic star. The star lies with one point on the diagonal and pointing to the top right-hand of the flag. The tip of the point lies on the diagonal of a point where larger arc of the crescent completed cuts the diagonal'.

Like most symbols of sovereignty, formal representations of the Pakistani flag have been subject to greater interpretation and discussion than to inner reflection on the meaning and significance of its content. Even after its adoption by the first constituent assembly on 11 August 1947 *(Figure 2)*, the motif of the crescent on flags flying in the new republic often inadvertently showed the waning instead of the waxing moon.

To this day it has proven difficult to standardize the Pakistani flag—it appears in different hues of green, with the white crescent and the heraldic star not uncommonly depicted at alternating angles. Quite apart from the continuing variations in its appearance, there has been no dearth of contestation on who actually designed the national flag. Conflicting claims are not untypical in Pakistani history, but one would have thought that in matters to do with the national flag the issue would be settled after six decades of independence. Most standard works still tend to credit lovable-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah for the design of the flag which, with the exception of the vertical white stripe at the mast, had been the standard of the All India Muslim League for over forty years.

While sticklers for empirical fact may continue to disagree on such matters of detail, it is identification and involvement with the primary symbol of state sovereignty which imbues it with real meaning in the life of a nation. As photographs in this essay make amply clear, the symbol of Pakistan's national sovereignty, widely interpreted and creatively appropriated, has acquired a multiplicity of meanings for its people *(Figures 3–46)*. For most it is a legitimizing symbol of identity while for others it serves as a decorative emblem which can more readily attract attention to commercial products because of its familiarity. The intermeshing of the emotive and the purely functional in the living history of the Pakistani flag ensures it a ubiquitous presence in the country. It does not guarantee circumspection on whether the symbolism of the national standard at all strikes a chord with the evolving history of the nation.

Most Pakistanis know that the green background and the crescent are an expression of the nation's affinity

with Islam. Only a handful might be able to explain the inward symbolism of the colours used for the flag or what the monogram of crescent and star is intended to convey. Green undoubtedly is the colour of Islam, the faith of the overwhelming majority of Pakistanis. It is also a symbol of prosperity, just as the colour white is an evocation of peace. The white stripe was added at the Quaid-i-Azam's behest to underscore the Muslim nation-state's firm commitment to extending equal rights of citizenship to its non-Muslim minorities. The crescent as the rising moon represents progress while the five-rayed heraldic star signifies light and knowledge.

Over the years the dark green and white of the flag, far from symbolizing prosperity and peace for all Pakistanis have, metaphorically speaking, almost merged into each other, not so much to reflect the better accommodation of minority religious groups but their extreme isolation and abject marginalization. Official flags of political parties in Pakistan pursuing conservative, if not 'Islamic' agendas, have readily adopted lighter shades of green minus the politically significant white stripe along with the crescent and the star. As the country has been convulsed into a spate of violence along religious and sectarian lines in the past decade and a half, the symbolic white of the flag, whether as peace or accommodation of minority groups, stands seriously undermined. If prosperity and peace have been compromised in the interest of the politics of expediency, the significance of the rising moon and the star as symbols of progress, light and knowledge have become victims of an all-pervasive national amnesia. Not only have the indicators of progress shown distinct signs of regression in the last decade or so, particularly in the all-important field of education, but have been replaced by an ambience of distrust and hatred, drowning the illuminating light which was meant to be the pride of a young nation devoted to the active pursuit of knowledge.

Could it be that few Pakistanis comprehend the significance of the symbols of their postcolonial identity as an independent nation-state? With standards of living falling below acceptable levels for an increasing number and no evidence of peace and progress on the national horizon, knowledge of the declared goals of independence can be potentially explosive. This is probably why an otherwise interventionary state feels compelled to turn the other cheek at the display of remarkably imaginative, if potentially disrespectful, replicas of the national flag used for commercial and celebratory purposes. An intriguing variant of the Pakistani flag sold by street vendors in Lahore on the eve of Independence day portrays the Quaid-i-Azam and the poet and philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal strategically located between the crescent and the star, not to mention Mickey Mouse flying the national insignia in the white stripe with a heart-warming caption *Dil, Dil Pakistan* in an allusion to the enormously popular song by Vital Signs *(Figure 3)*. Amusing and playful, it takes liberties with creative interpretations of the national flag which would be unthinkable in most other national contexts. But when the bare means to knowledge are unavailable to the vast majority of the citizenry, most forms of entertainment frowned upon and curbs on the imagination stringently enforced, emotive outpourings such as these have to qualify as genuine and legitimate forms of nationalist self-expression—*Pakistan Zindabad!*

Islam is, vexillologically,[i] perhaps the most recognizable religion. It considers the colour green sacred—this being the colour of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) standard, of the dome and interior of his mausoleum and the green and white flags of his descendents.[ii] It is the colour of hope, strength, longevity and immortality.[iii] The symbols of the crescent and star are also widely used. The crescent represents progress and the five-rayed star represents light and knowledge. A crescent and star together stand for paradise.[iv]

The crescent of the new moon represents the beginning of each lunar month, in the calendar used by Muslims. The crescent (*hilal* in Arabic), was the political, military and religious emblem of the Byzantine and Turkish empires, and now generally of Islamic countries. It was once thought that the Ottoman Turks adopted the crescent for their flags after capturing Constantinople in 1453 CE, but they had in fact, been using the symbol for at least a century before that, for it appeared on the standards of their infantry under Sultan Orhan (c.1324–1360 CE).[v] There are a large number of nations which use green and/or the crescent and star on its flags, among them being Algeria, Malaysia, the Maldives Islands, Mauritania, Tunisia, Turkey, and of course, Pakistan. The dark green in the Pakistani flag represents the Muslim majority and the white signifies the minorities, and traditionally symbolizes peace.

Figures 3–23. Jashn-e Azaadi
INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

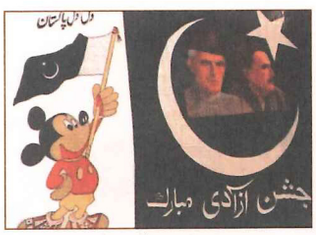
Come 14 August, the streets are a riot of green and white—the flags adorning architecture and vehicles (Figures 3–12); men, women and children wearing clothes in patriotic colours (Figures 13–16); painting the flag on their face (Figures 17–18); adorning themselves with accessories, such as badges, specially crafted jewellery, belts etc. depicting the flag (Figures 19–20). In the spirit of the festivities, the bakeries sell cakes and pastries which are versions of the flag (Figures 21–22).

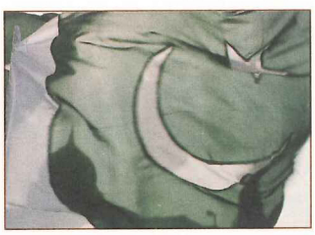
The flags comes in several sizes and in various shades of green depending on the material used, usually cotton or crepe. The star and crescent are usually screen-printed, although the appliquéd version being weatherproof is more durable. However, polythene flags with their plastic masts are the most popular. A great deal of liberty is taken with the design of the flag as is seen by one with Mickey Mouse waving a flag in the white portion and Quaid-i-Azam and Allama Iqbal between the crescent and the star (Figure 3).

More popular than the flags are the jhandis *(a string of 50–100 miniature flag buntings) which are mass produced on newsprint. They are multicoloured, and finding a green* jhandi *is often a challenge (Figure 23).*

i. Vexillology: The study of flags.
ii. THEROUX, ALEXANDER, *The Secondary Colors*. Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1996 (p. 280).
iii. CHEVALIER, JEAN AND GHEERBRANT, ALAIN *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Penguin Books, 1996 (p. 451).
iv. CAVENDISH, RICHARD (ed.) *Man, Myth and Magic, An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Supernatural* (p. 542).
v. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. 15th Edition, 1768 (p. 728).

3–5.





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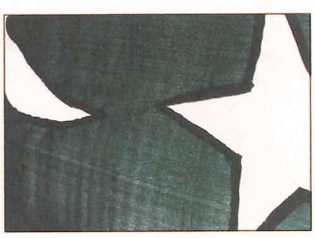

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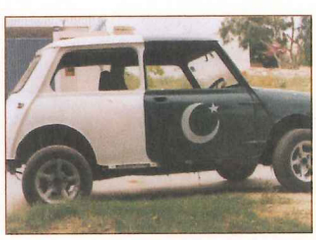
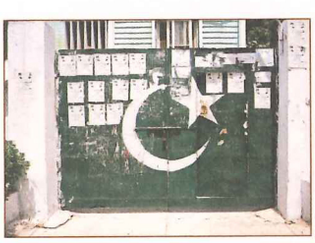
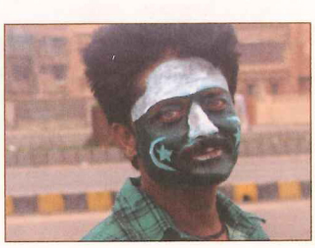


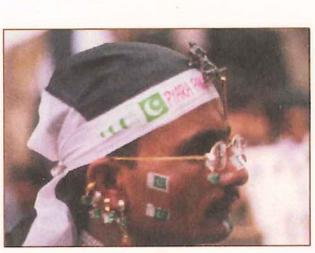
12–14.



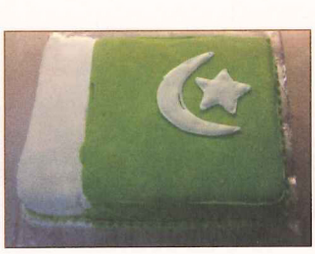
15–17.



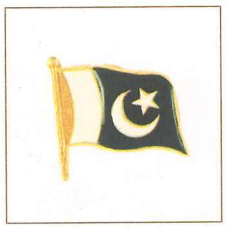
18–20.

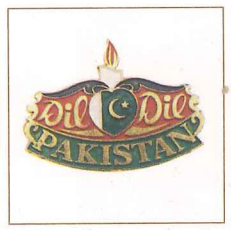


21–23.



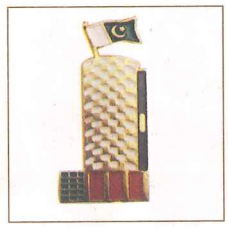
24a–c.



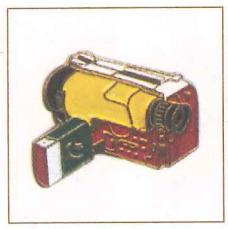


24d–e.

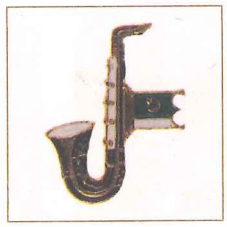
24f–i.



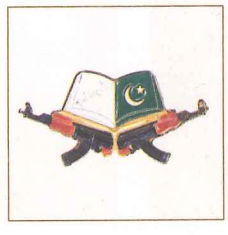
24j–n.

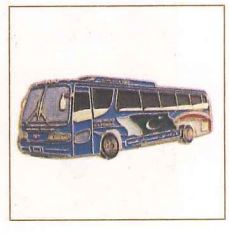


24o–r.



24s–w.





Figures 24a-w. 'PATRIOTIC' BADGES

During the week of Independence day, thousands of badges are on sale, ranging from miniature Pakistani flags to Superman flying with the flag held aloft.

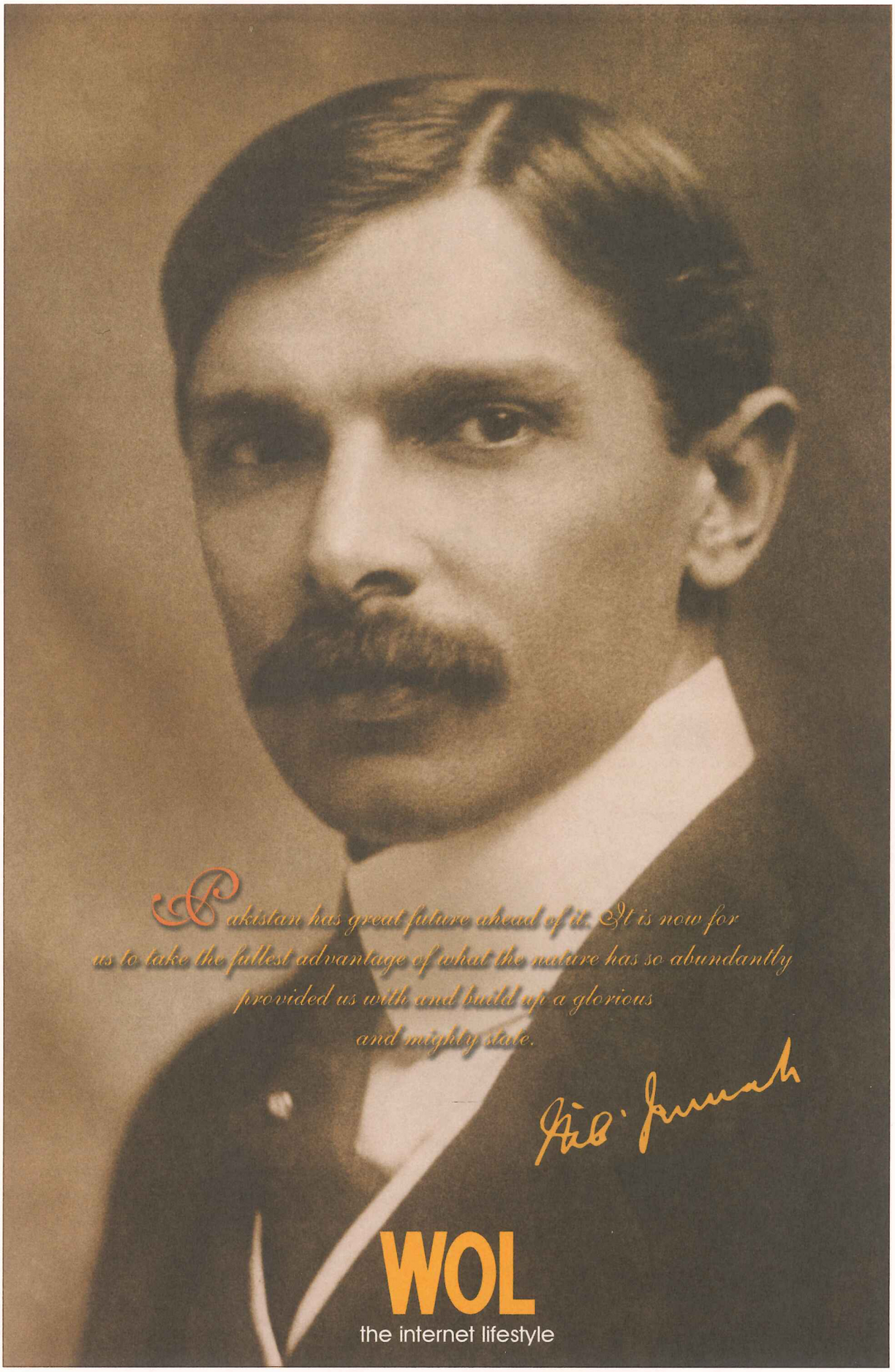
Abid Munawwar and Shakeel are the two main badge-makers in Karachi, with Alvi from Lahore being the third—all intent on churning out designs different from those of former years. After being designed and die cut, each of these metal badges is painted by hand.

According to Munawwar, printer and badge-maker, the trend of designing highly decorative badges started in 1985, the year General Ziaul Haq announced that Independence day should be celebrated with pomp and flair.

This inspired combining the flag with national icons and other symbols and resulted in some unusual and unorthodox designs. Historical buildings, roses, angels, doves and hearts remain all-time favourites. Mobile phones, video cameras and computers represent the aspirations of the urban populace. Many are associated with significant events, nuclear testing triggered badges with images of missiles, and the recent war in Afghanistan prompted the design of the Pakistani flag superimposed on a gun. The introduction of a television channel, Geo, some years ago led to the its logo's utilization on the badges. Yet others are obviously foreign, as admitted by Munawwar: 'There is no logical connection between a saxophone and Pakistan but this is what sells.'

The market for these accessories exists in both urban and rural areas. Lahore provides the largest customer base for the sale of Independence day goods and the national flag badges are sold all the year round.

1.



S. AKBAR ZAIDI

RE-IMAGINING THE IMAGE

S. AKBAR ZAIDI

Like all Pakistanis, I have grown up seeing pictures of Mr Jinnah as an emaciated, haggard, old man in a *sherwani*[i] and Jinnah cap, printed in our textbooks and in special newspaper editions commemorating him or celebrating an event related to Pakistan. So, I was rather surprised recently by the appearance of numerous posters and hoardings *(Figure 1)* all over Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad of a dashing, handsome, young man who bears no resemblance to the old one. Five photographs—two with moustache and three without, of a very stylish and elegant Mr Jinnah, dressed in formal attire, debonair and urbane—challenge our imagination. Perhaps they can even force us to rethink the Pakistani nation itself.

This idea of re-imagining the image of Pakistan and of Mr Jinnah, addresses, in many ways, the very core of the nature of this country, its existence, its form, its confusions. Born in 1947 CE out of the division of British India, into a Muslim Pakistan and a predominantly Hindu India, Pakistan has been searching for its identity since its very inception. Many of Mr Jinnah's statements suggest that he intended a non-theocratic, perhaps even secular and democratic, state for Muslims to live in, wishfully thinking that religious distinctions would wither away with time into a more wholesome 'Pakistani' identity. For numerous reasons this vision never materialised in any substantive way, and soon after Mr Jinnah's death, non-democratic and theocratic forces began to envision a very different Pakistan, most strongly voiced thirty years after Mr Jinnah's death in the slogan popularised by General Ziaul Haq's dictatorial regime, *Pakistan ka matlab kya? La ilaha illallah*.[ii]

Helping the Taliban in Afghanistan, acquiring nuclear capabilities, and allowing the rise of intolerance and sectarian violence internally under the banner of a fundamentalist Islam—all these have contributed to an image problem of considerable proportions; 9/11 has not helped things either. Former president General Pervez Musharraf tried to peddle a 'softer', more liberal image by publicly showing his support for theatre and film

Figure 1. A poster with the photograph of young Barrister Mohammad Ali Jinnah, advertising an internet company named 'World on Line' in 2005–2006. Size: 23x36 cm

i. *Sherwani*: a high-collared long coat.

ii. *'What does Pakistan mean? There is no God, but God...'*

festivals, and by trying to promote women's involvement in the political process. He made frequent references to Mr Jinnah's pronouncements and ideals, visualising a very different Pakistan from the one that now exists. It is in this larger project, of recasting an image for Pakistan, that a young Mr Jinnah's photographs play an important role.

These photographs were taken when he was in his late twenties or early thirties, at a time when he probably returned from reading at the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, in London. He looks affluent enough, which means that perhaps the young barrister, who was to become one of Bombay's richest and finest lawyers, had by then overcome the trials and tribulations of the earlier years of his practice when he was seldom solicited to plead a case. (But then again, knowing Mr Jinnah, who always had a taste for fine clothes, he could very well have been unemployed and still been dressed to the nines!). Nevertheless, this is the time, notwithstanding the notion of history mythologized by Pakistani and Muslim apologists, when no idea of Pakistan existed; the Muslim League had not been created, and Muslims were just one of the subjects—though perhaps more loyal than any other—of His Majesty. The elite circles of Bombay to which Mr Jinnah belonged, and to which many Parsees belonged, may have discussed politics (since the Indian National Congress had been in existence for about twenty years), and may even have talked about Muslim representation, but the workaholic Mr Jinnah would have found time for little else.

It must be said here that the photographs of the Quaid[i] *(Figure 2)*, rather than those of young Mr Jinnah, as the official photographs of the government of Pakistan, make a lot of sense. The *sherwani* or *achkan*, which the Quaid wore increasingly towards the end of his life, has become part of official attire in Pakistan, at least as a symbol of some notion of *Pakistaniat*.[ii] Most swearing-in ceremonies of ministers, judges and other officials have the men wearing the Quaid's uniform. The photographs of the old Quaid are officially propagated because they are of the period when Pakistan had either been created or when the Muslim League was in the process of negotiating special privileges from the viceroy in New Delhi. While a Pakistani nation may not have been formed (or even envisaged) by the time Mr Jinnah became the Quaid, he certainly had become the sole spokesman for Muslim interests in India; hence, the logic of the numerous governments of Pakistan appropriating the Quaid as the image for the nation.

The introduction of a young and dashing Mr Jinnah, the 'poster boy' entering urban Pakistan's public space was the private and voluntary initiative of an internet company based in Lahore. Those responsible for the project state that they want the country's youth to be inspired by the person they call the Quaid-i-Azam (although no such person existed at the time the photographs were taken), and believe that the young cannot identify with what they call the *baba*[iii] figure of the old Quaid. With over 200,000 posters printed and distributed across urban Pakistan, this is a project in nationalism of a very different kind.

2.

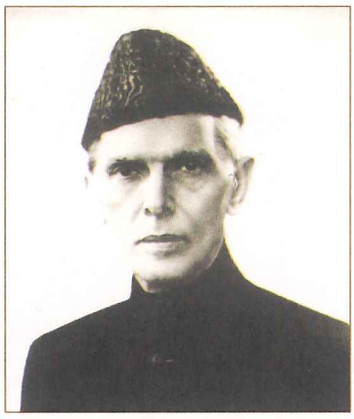


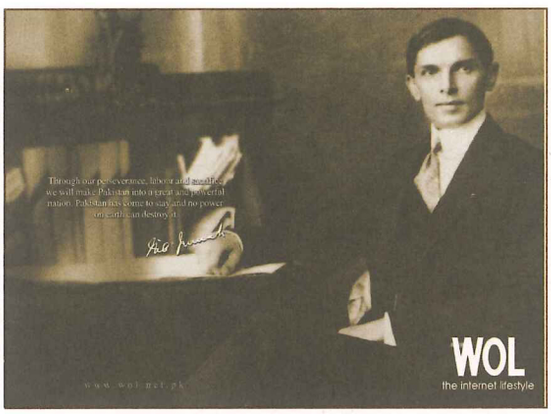
Figure 2. Official portrait of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, wearing a sherwani and his Jinnah cap.

i. Quaid: Leader. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was given the title Quaid-i-Azam, the 'Great Leader' in the 1940s.

ii. *Pakistaniat:* Pakistani identity.

iii. *Baba*, colloquially, an aged man.

3.



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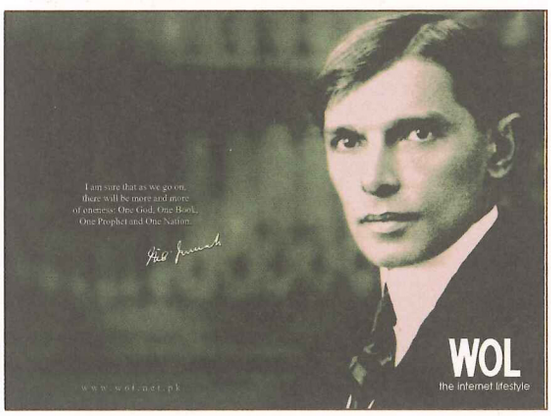

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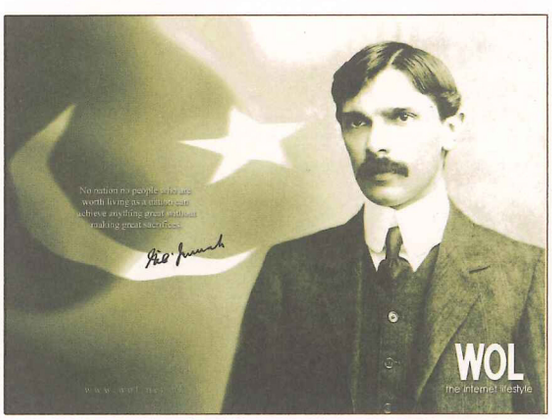


Above: Hoardings and posters of these photographs have been displayed in several cities and towns across Pakistan, and are advertising for an internet company named 'World on Line'. (The writer saw one of these posters on the office wall of a senior bureaucrat in the Ministry of Finance in Islamabad, although the more sober, de riguer, portrait is the official image usually adorning government offices). As the sponsors state, 'The idea of projecting the Quaid in such a manner was very well accepted and gained popularity among all classes of the society.'

The statements of the Quaid read (from top to bottom):

Figure 3. 'Through our perseverance, labour and sacrifice, we will make Pakistan into a great and powerful nation. Pakistan has come to stay and no power on earth can destroy it'. (Young Mr Jinnah in his study, Delhi).

Figure 4. 'I am sure that as we go on, there will be more and more oneness: One God, One Book, One Prophet and One Nation'.

Figure 5. 'No nation, no people who are worth living as a nation can achieve anything great without making great sacrifices'.

Size of posters: 23x36 cm (Size of hoardings variable).

A quotation in English, a different one for each of the posters, sits alongside the photograph; and each bears the signature of M.A. Jinnah. An anomaly is that every single quotation is that of the Quaid-i-Azam and not of the young Jinnah. For example, an extraordinarily elegant and handsome Mr Jinnah sits at his desk looking very much a barrister, with the following words next to his picture: *Through our perseverance, labour and sacrifice we will make Pakistan into a great and powerful nation. Pakistan has come to stay and no power on earth can destroy it (Figure 3).* The photograph was probably taken almost forty-five years before the statement was made. Another photograph *(not shown here)* of an exquisitely dressed and moustachioed Mr Jinnah states: *Do your duty and have faith in God. There is no power on earth that can undo Pakistan. It has come to stay.* While people might be able to understand the message and the sentiment behind it, one wonders if the image of an unknown pre-Quaid Mr Jinnah speaks to the ordinary reader at all? Does this anglicised barrister speak the language of the sherwanied (or even elegantly suited, but elderly) Quaid? Does the Quaid speak the language of the nation? Does Mr Jinnah?

Pakistan's demographics, with perhaps more than 50 per cent of Pakistanis living in urban areas and with 39 per cent of the total population between 10 to 30 years of age, suggest that this attempt to reach out to the youth can yield a high dividend—which is what the message is trying to achieve. The group of young individuals behind this idea feels that the youth needs to reconnect with the Quaid and with Pakistan. They feel that a youthful image of the Quaid might revitalise the young in Pakistan. And though probably unfamiliar with Benedict Anderson and his *Imagined Communities*,[1] in which he writes, the *young and youth signified dynamism, progress, self-sacrificing idealism and revolutionary will*, they probably subscribe to this sentiment too. Also, the image of the new poster boy fits well with 'enlightened moderation', the recent catch-phrase for Pakistan. It emphasises the non-conservative, modern and liberal political stance being espoused by its leaders; and better reflects the modern social trends and images that are manifest in numerous forms across urban Pakistan.

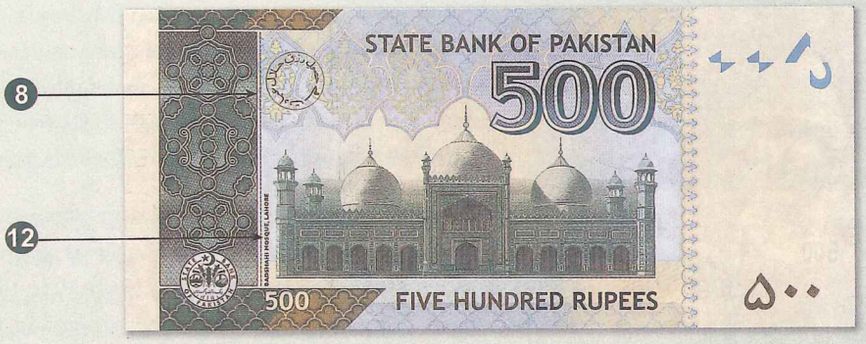
Come to think of it, perhaps the image of the young, urbane, cosmopolitan Mr Jinnah far better reflects the juncture where Pakistan is today, compared to the image of the old, ill, and exhausted Quaid-i-Azam.

REFERENCE

1. ANDERSON, BENEDICT *Imagined Communities: Spread of Nationalism.* Verso, London and New York, 1983, 1991.

1.

State Bank of Pakistan
issues
New 500 Rupees Note
with attractive design and several new security features



1 **Portrait Watermark**
When the note is held against the light, an image of Quaid-e-Azam can be seen.

2 **Numeral 500 Watermark**
When the note is held against the light, the numeral 500 can be seen on the left side.

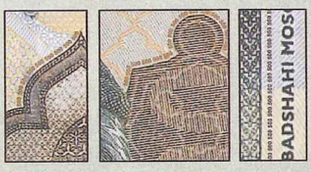
3 **Window Security Thread**
A vertical window security thread with denomination numeral '500' appears as silver dashes at the front left side of the note. The security thread appears as yellow and pinkish red fluorescent bands when viewed under ultraviolet light.

4 **Geometrical Patterns**
Decorative ornamental patterns appear at the front & back of the note.

5 **See through Numeral 500**
The numeral 500 printed in Urdu, partly appears at the front and partly at the back, can be seen as a complete figure when the note is held against the light.

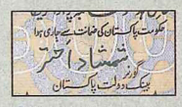
6 **Intaglio Printing**
Quaid-e-Azam's portrait, numeral 500 and the lines at left & right side of the note are printed by intaglio process. One can easily feel the raised printing by touching the note.

7 **Hidden 500 Numeral**
On tilting the note, a hidden 500 numeral can be seen.



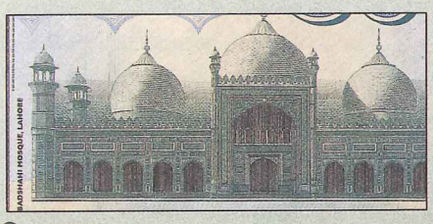
8 **Micro lettering – Front & Back**
Micro lettering numeral 500 appears at the front and back of the note.

9 **Identification Mark**
One raised circle appears on the note for the visually impaired persons to recognise the note with a touch.



10 **Colour Signature**
Governor's signature in rich deep green colour is appearing on the note.

11 **Year of Production**
Year of Production is printed on the note.



12 **Name of the Location**
The picture and name of Badshahi Mosque, Lahore appear on the reverse of the note.

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State Bank of Pakistan
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CURRENTS IN CURRENCY
Design of Currency Notes

QUDDUS MIRZA

Mushtaq Ahmad Yousufi, a celebrated Urdu writer, recommends in his book, *Zarguzisht*, a way to inculcate the habit of saving money among young men: Print female nudes on currency notes. The visuals, he argues, will make the youth hesitant to spend their money as they will be more excited by the prospect of collecting as many notes as possible.

Alas, no government in Pakistan—or anywhere else, for that matter—has accepted this suggestion. Still, the fact remains that currency, an item in everyday use by the public is worth studying in order to discern attitudes towards formal aspects of aesthetics that exist in a culture.

All objects possess both functional qualities and aesthetic elements. In our culture, however, functional features are often buried beneath excessive ornamentation, and Pakistani currency notes are no exception. Both sides of the notes are decorated with innumerable patterns, motifs, lines and shapes, with variations in colour and size indicating respective values. Each note ascribes to a deep-rooted aesthetic system that not only shares attributes with international currencies but also participates in a local design sense that is replicated in various artistic and commercial domains.

One side of the notes of all denominations has a uniform design, its most prominent feature being the figure of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Quaid-i-Azam ('the Great Leader'). This consistent iconography suggests that in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, there is only one undisputed national hero. Interestingly, the image of this revered individual is 'corrected' with the addition of a cap (named after him and usually worn with a traditional outfit) that adjusts the context of his otherwise western attire.

The alteration in the dress code of the Father of the Nation on the paper currency reflects the official tendency to 'amend' the country's past. This attitude has left its mark on other social spheres such as education and governance. Each new government—be it a democracy, dictatorship or interim bureaucratic arrangement—reconstructs and re-interprets Pakistani

Figure 1. A poster advertising the redesigned Rs 500 note issued by the State Bank in 2006.

The new designs have been a collaboration between the in-house design team of the Pakistan Security Printing Press and a foreign design firm specializing in currency notes, and were approved by several authorities—the prime minister included.

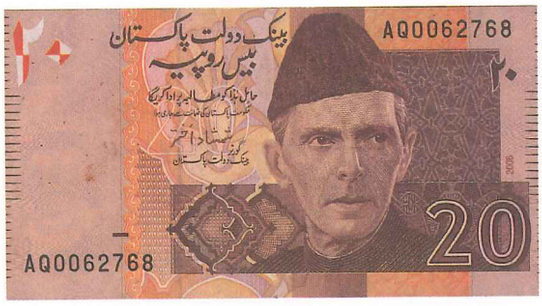
The currency notes have security features which are at par with international standards. Amongst them is the inclusion of raised circles printed in intaglio to facilitate the visually impaired. Also used is state-of-the-art technology in printing the national flag in Optical Variable Ink (which changes colour from green to gold and vice versa).

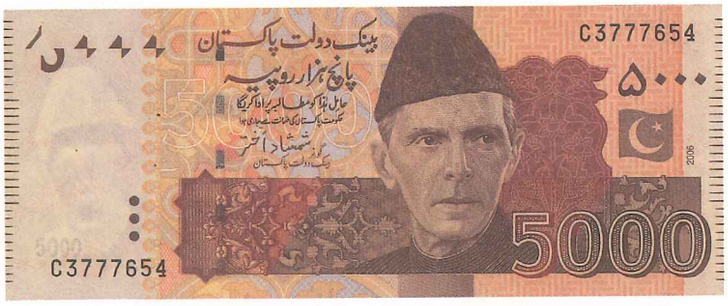
The most prominent element on our currency notes, the image of the Quaid-i-Azam, the founder of Pakistan, is observed as a watermark and is printed in intaglio to the right. The Quaid is shown wearing a Jinnah cap and a sherwani, the traditional attire. In the older note, he is shown wearing a suit and tie (Figure 2). The reverse side shows the Badshahi mosque, an architectural icon from Lahore, the capital of the province of Punjab. The numerals as well as the text on the note are in Urdu and English, the two most widely understood languages.

The notes currently in circulation are in the denominations of Rs 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1000 and 5000.

2.

3–4.





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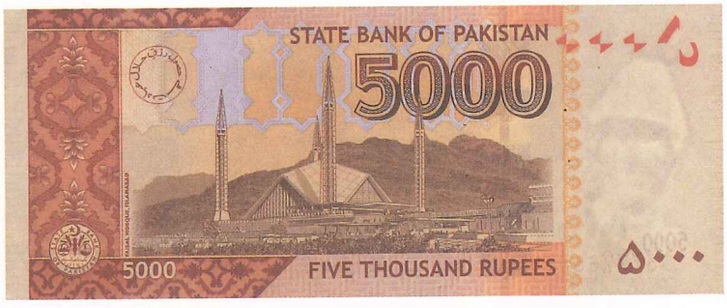

Figure 2. The old Rs 500 note in which the Quaid is shown wearing a Jinnah cap with a suit and tie. The note is ornamented with complex floral and organic patterns and has subtle colours in various hues of blue, green and purple.

Figures 3–8. The two currency notes of Rs 20 and Rs 5000 introduced in 2006. Note the similarity in colour. As in the Rs 500 notes, the western attire of the Quaid has been replaced by the national dress, the sherwani. Figures 7 and 8 show the Rs 20 note redesigned in August 2008 with distinguishing colour features.

Figure 2. Rs 500 (Reduced from 17.76x73 cm)
Figures 3, 5, 7&8. Rs 20
(Reduced from 12.2 x6.5 cm)
Figures 4&6. Rs 5000 (Reduced 16.4x6.5cm)

7–8.

The redesigning sparked a vehement reaction from the public. A letter to the editor printed in the Daily *Dawn* on 12 March 2007 is expressive of the general disgruntlement:

The State Bank of Pakistan has nearly completed the exercise of issuing new currency notes of different denominations. It is not clear why this exercise was undertaken. It was never explained what was wrong with the existing designs.

If the people were asked to express their preference, I am sure a vast majority would have liked to continue with the old currency notes...[they] were distinctive, beautiful, eye-catching and very easily distinguishable. The sizes were proper... and were easy to handle. Even an illiterate person with no claim to intelligence would not be misled.

Now look at what has happened. The new currency notes are hardly distinguishable. The sizes have been ridiculously reduced, making it inconvenient to handle them... the new notes indicate the 'optical devaluation' of the currency. Unless the SBP is insistent upon sticking to its position, it should revert to the earlier currency notes and phase out the new notes gradually.

—Safdar Hussain Kazmi, Islamabad.

The crucial issue being raised here is the neglect of consumer consideration, a necessary component in any design process, especially one involving items such as currency notes which would be used by every Pakistani.

Visual clarity is a significant issue when it comes to differentiating currency notes. The colour similarity of two notes introduced in 2006, Rs 20 and Rs 5000 (*Figures 3–6*) caused considerable difficulty in differentiation for a public accustomed to distinct colour codification.

A research-oriented collaborative approach valuing the opinions of the consumers would have been beneficial and would have facilitated a democratic design process. Also, once a design consensus had been reached, another risk-free alternative would have been to pre-test it with focus groups. Commenting on user-based participation, Nayyar Muzaffar, the Executive Director of the Pakistan Security Printing Corporation, clarified that in order to maintain the confidentiality of the high security features, and to prevent counterfeits, it is not possible to involve the public in the design process. She conceded, however, that greater interaction with the public and engagement of the media around the launch of the bank notes would have helped in preparing them for the forthcoming changes.

Furthermore, Muzaffar stated that it was usual in other parts of the world to introduce redesigned notes every seven years or so—the redesign of notes had been under consideration for several years—and the Rs 100 note had been changed after an extended period of thirty-seven years. In fact, the decision to replace the western attire of the Quaid (*Figure 2*) to the national dress, the *sherwani*, was discussed in the Cabinet as long ago as 1981.

Note: An identifying colour was added to the Rs 20 currency note after much public debate in August 2008 (Figures 7&8).

history to fit its agenda. Characteristics of individuals from bygone days are altered to recast them as liberal, Islamic, or conservative.

That said, printing Jinnah's image on currency notes reveals a healthy approach. Given that his image has adorned Pakistani currency since Independence, many argue that the importance of other personalities—poets, writers, intellectuals, and scientists—should be acknowledged in the same manner. Such diverse iconography would not only pay tribute to national heroes but would also project Pakistan as a country that respects its prominent citizens. Such well-circulated images would also serve as a source of inspiration for the youth, who have yet to be fully acquainted with the nation-builders of yesteryear.

This representation of a human figure runs contrary to the prohibition of iconography in Islam—essentially a means to discourage idol worship. In fact, images of national leaders and heads of state of all Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia, are printed on currency notes. This re-creation of human figures is also disallowed in other systems of thought, because this activity was thought to interfere with God's design. This aspect was mentioned in one of Borges' essays, in which he writes about a Chinese emperor, who banned mirrors in his kingdom, as they reconstructed human beings. Actually, in Islamic culture, there is an aversion to 'naturalistic' art as a whole; human beings, as well as, nature, as created by God, are not supposed to be recreated. This aspect was explained by Seyyed Hossein Nasr in one of his lectures at George Washington University: *In the context of Islamic art (there is a) shunning of any form, which would in a sense imprison the spirit and instead of reflecting Unity would try to ape Unity on the level of the Creator... The consequence of this is two things: first of all, the creation of what is called an 'abstract' art. Secondly, an aversion, and opposition completely to naturalism.*

The flip side of currency notes boasts images of historic sites and buildings, even though few Pakistanis are probably interested in such continued exposure—to a college in Peshawar, a railway tunnel in Quetta and a bank building in Islamabad. Perhaps the authorities should consider replacing these heritage sites with samples of Pakistani art. The notes could be utilised as vehicles to introduce local art to the masses.

Meanwhile, the intricate patterning of Pakistani currency remains one of its most peculiar features. No doubt, this practice has a functional aspect as it discourages counterfeiting. Security requirements

aside, complicated designs are a common attribute of official documents and academic certificates issued by the state; with overpowering arabesques obscuring important facts and figures. As such, the overt motifs negate their *raison d'être.*

Interestingly, the phenomenon of 'form *failing* function'—as opposed to 'form following function'—can also be observed in other aspects of Pakistani culture. In this context, an example one must mention are the plays or serial telefilms aired on Pakistan Television. In most of the dramas, at sentimental moments and crucial scenes, the background music is so loud that the dialogue cannot be heard, and one can comprehend the plot only if one is trained in the skill of lip-reading—in fact, the background music, steals the show...quite literally!

It can be argued that this propensity to obscure information with aesthetic flourishes is linked to our national character and the usage of language. As a nation, we are accustomed to camouflaging fact as rumour while the truth is mostly rendered in flowery language. Reality is habitually tempered with jokes, fables, and analogies. This trait may be a fallout of the Mughal and subsequent colonial rule in the subcontinent: the social dynamic of powerful courts and colonial circles may have induced the public to believe that the only safe mode of expression was a disguised and hidden discourse. Speaking and writing would thus cloud true intentions with superficial superlatives, a legacy that remains visible in contemporary discourse.

Ultimately, local currency notes successfully capture the psyche of the nation, whether by revealing social conflict or echoing quintessential Pakistani traits.

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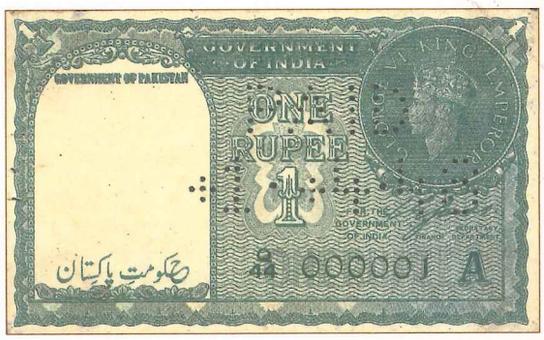

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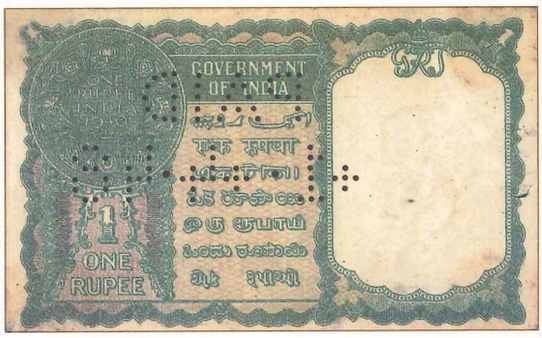

Figures 9–17. These currency notes were presented to the Quaid-i-Azam by the Ministry of Finance, on 1 April 1948. Issued by the Reserve Bank of India, the note is overprinted with 'Government of Pakistan' in English and Urdu. The denomination of the note (Rupees 1, 2, 5, 10, and 100) is written in seven different scripts signifying the many languages spoken in the country. On the right is the portrait of King Emperor George VI.

Figure 18. (Pages 198&199) The front of the Rs 100 note, 1948.

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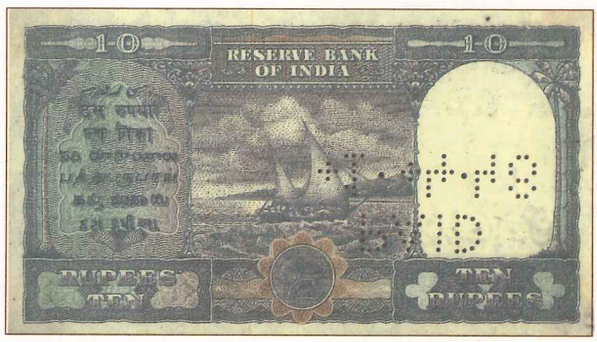
13–14.



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QUDDUS MIRZA

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1A
1A
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INDIA POSTAGE

SOLDIER BAZAR
1 OCT47
KARACHI

2.

15 AUG. 1947
1½As
PAKISTAN POSTAGE

3.

2½As
PAKISTAN POSTAGE

4.

3As
PAKISTAN POSTAGE

پاکستان زندہ باد
PAKISTAN ZINDABAD
15 AUG. 47
KARACHI

5.

پاکستان
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پاکستان زندہ باد
15 AUGUST 1947
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

A Pictorial History of Pakistan through Postage Stamps

VISUAL CONTRIBUTION: ADIL SALAHUDDIN
ESSAY: RUBINA SAIGOL

Nations and states write their histories not only in words and language, but also in visual representations encompassing all forms of art, design and architecture. They are concealed and revealed in the iconographies latent within rich and variegated symbols—the flag, coins, currency notes, national anthems, songs, poetry, uniforms and the national motto such as 'unity, faith and discipline'.[i] As objects of collective desire, signs and symbols become extensions of the self, offering everlasting life to mortals who often sacrifice individual life at the alter of the eternal one represented by the nation and its material embodiment, the State.

The signs and symbols of the nation and state become inscribed on the minds and hearts of the people through continuous reiteration and remembering. The perpetual re-living of past wounds through symbols of death and sacrifice, the incessant recollection of past glories, and constant visions of a great and prosperous future allow the reinforcement of the spirit of nationalism.

National iconography, much like nationalist history, is among the most powerful tools that nations employ to write themselves into collective memory. Stamps, like coins and currency notes, have a long history and are one of the most widely used sources of the production of the national collective Self. They are colourful, often beautiful and depict a wide and interesting variety of ideas—landscape, natural beauty, development, war, glory, triumph, victory, natural resources, learning and bio-diversity. Moreover, they are inexpensive and easily available. The study and collection of postage stamps, philately, is therefore a very popular hobby.

Additionally, stamps are political signs of the governments in power. They are often used to signify the triumphs and victories, and to silence and hide what cannot be acknowledged. In particular the stories of loss and defeat are not told. They very often reflect the contradictions inherent in the very notion of the nation—that it is homogenous and totally different and distinct from other nations, specifically rival states. Stamps may inadvertently exhibit mixtures,

i. Proposed by Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The Indian subcontinent has a long history of *Dak Chauki* (Postal Service), in the form of a horse-and-foot service which was available from 1296 CE during the reign of Allauddin Khilji, and was maintained in order to receive regular news of his army.

Sindh has the distinction of having the first postage stamps issued in Asia. These Scinde Dawk Stamps were issued in 1852 CE, a bare 12 years after the first adhesive postage stamps were introduced in Great Britain. The initial stamps were designed by Sir Bartle Frere, commissioner of Sind (1850–1859 CE), with the help of Lees Coffey, then postmaster of Karachi. The stamp depicted a heart-shaped device divided into three segments, each containing a letter of the acronym E.I.C. (East India Company). The whole is enclosed within a circle containing the inscription Scinde District Dawk.

After Partition of the subcontinent, Indian stamps continued to be used in Pakistan for about six weeks until 1 October 1947 CE. Indian stamps overprinted in black with the word 'Pakistan' were then introduced *(Figure 1)*. This overprint was done by the Security Printing Press in Nasik, and later by the Government Press in Pakistan. These continued in circulation until 31 October 1949 when they were invalidated and finally destroyed.

The Pakistan Security Printing Corporation (PSPC) was established in 1949 after more than two years of negotiation with Messrs. De La Rue & Company Ltd of London. The latter had been printing and providing stamps to British India prior to the establishment of the Printing Corporation in Nasik in 1926 CE. The PSPC in addition to the printing of stamps, is responsible for printing of banknotes, cheques, postal stationery, passports, national identity cards, judicial and non-judicial paper, revenue documents, and a variety of other government-related documents.

Figure 1. Indian postage stamps with portrait of King George VI and overprinted 'Pakistan', introduced on 1 October 1947 CE
a. 3-Pie b. ½ Anna c. 9-Pie d. 1-Anna.

INDEPENDENCE COMMEMORATIVE 15-7-1948
2. Constituent Assembly 1 ½ Anna
3. Karachi Airport Entrance 2 ½ Anna
4. Gateway to Lahore Fort 3 Anna
5. Crescent and Stars with leaf pattern Re 1 with the inscription of 'Pakistan Zindabad' (Long Live Pakistan) in Urdu and the date 15 August 1947.
Printers and designer Thomas De La Rue.

Note: The postage stamps are not as per original scale.

6a,b,c.

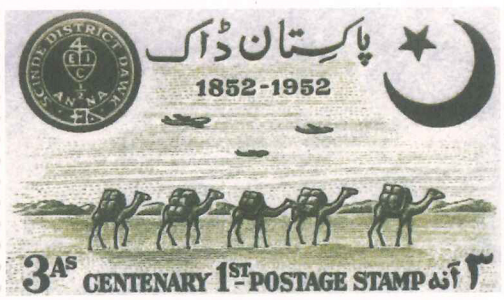
7a,b,c.

8a,b,c.

9a,b,c.

10&11a,b.

12.



13.

14.

15.

FIRST REGULAR SERIES (14-8-1948)
Printers and designer Thomas De La Rue

Figure 6. Scales of Justice
a. 3-Pies b. 6-Pies c. 9-Pies

Figure 7. Crescent and Star
a. 1-Anna b. 1 1/2 Annas c. 2-Annas
This is the only stamp design personally approved by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Note the reversed position of the crescent in Figure c.

Figure 8. Lloyd's Barrage
a. 2 1/2-Annas b. 3 1/2-Annas c. 4-Annas

Figure 9. Karachi Port Trust
a. 6-Annas b. 8-Annas c. 12-Annas

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUES 14-8-1951
Printers: Thomas De La Rue
Designer: Abdur Rehman Chughtai

Figure 10. An Aeroplane in front of a star and crescent and an ancient hour glass. 3-Annas

Figure 11. Leaf Pattern in Saracenic Style
a. 4-Annas b. 6-Annas

Figure 12. SCINDE DAWK COMMEMORATIVE 14-8-1952
Printers and designer: Thomas De La Rue
Original Scinde Dawk Stamp of 1/2 Anna issued on 1-7-1852 together with a string of camels and aeroplanes. 3-Annas

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUES 14-8-1954
Printers and designer: Thomas De La Rue

Figure 13. Spring in Gilgit. 9 Pies

Figure 14. Badshahi Mosque, Lahore. 1-Anna

Figure 15. CENTENARY OF THE 1857 *(this page)* STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE 10-5-1957
Figure '1857' bound with chains with a few links broken and the flag of Pakistan. 12-Annas
Printers and designer: Pakistan Security Printing Corporation (PSPC).

Note: The visual contribution also includes cancellers of the first day of issue on which a postage stamp is put on sale; a pictorial cancellation usually indicates the date and city where the item was first issued.

overlaps and commonalities that exist between peoples of different nations. Consequently, signs may in fact take on a life of their own not intended by their maker. This makes them an interesting study across periods in history because a fractured, multiple and interrupted reality emerges rather than a simple and linear narrative.

For this study a sample of stamps ranging from those published soon after the creation of Pakistan in 1947 to 2006 was selected to perceive the stories told by these national icons, those which remain untold, and how they figure as signs of the times in terms of their use by particular governments.

The main periods are the following:

1. just after Partition;
2. the eras of Field Marshal Ayub Khan (1958–1968 CE) and General Yahya Khan (1968–1971 CE);
3. the civilian government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1972–1977 CE);
4. the rule of General Ziaul Haq (1977–1988 CE);
5. the civilian governments of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif (1988–1999 CE),
6. the period of General Pervez Musharraf (1999–2008 CE).

Some of the recurring motifs will be discussed to underscore the continuity of state imperatives and appropriation of certain national symbols by all governments, military and civilian.

PARTITION AND THE EARLY YEARS: 1947–1957 CE *(Figures 1–15)*

On 1 October 1947, about six weeks after Partition Indian postage stamps appeared with the word 'Pakistan' overprinted on them by the Security Printing Press Nasik of India as well as by the government presses in Pakistan *(Figures 1a–d)*. These early stamps reflected the intermingling of the three identities—Indian, Pakistani and British—which had become increasingly incompatible and even inimical with time. Pakistan was literally and figuratively overprinted on India, the stamps capturing the reality of being one, yet divided. Interestingly, the prominent presence of King George VI dwarfed both India and Pakistan. 'These overprints were invalidated on 31 October 1949 and finally destroyed' according to the Pakistan Postage Stamp Catalogue.[1]

The first purely Pakistani stamps appeared as a set of four on 9 July 1948, with the words 'Pakistan Zindabad'

inscribed on them *(Figures 2–5)*. A striking characteristic of the early postage stamps was the use of artistic designs with traditional motifs and the absence of human figures; they have been acclaimed as some of the best stamps produced.

The crescent and the star were utilized constantly to represent the flag of the newly-born nation. They were sometimes combined with scales to denote justice and fair play which the new country promised. Slowly, the figure of Mohammad Ali Jinnah began to appear as a founder, and therefore the unifier, of a nation essentially divided due to various linguistic and ethnic groups residing within its borders.

In the early years the natural resources, beauty and economic development of East Pakistan were depicted regularly e.g. the tea gardens, Karnaphuli paper mills, the first session of the national assembly in Dacca, all appeared on stamps produced in the mid-1950s. Most stamps contained inscriptions in both Urdu and Bangla (Devanagari script) thereby recognizing the parity of the two wings of an aspiring and enthusiastic young nation. The 1957 commemorative stamps celebrating the 'Decade of Independence' mirrored development and progress in the form of a sui gas plant, a jute mill, a paper mill and a cement factory.

MILITARY RULE

I. AYUB KHAN ERA: 1958–1968 CE *(Figures 16–22)*

A majority of stamps issued during the period of Ayub Khan underlined his achievements as a 'great ruler'. He needed to project his rule as a time of liberalism, democracy, economic growth and of expansion in Pakistan's relations with other countries and the world community. After the war of 1965 there was also a need to demonstrate Pakistan's military prowess.

There was a denial of the illegality of military rule, as one of the first stamps issued after his takeover celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1958 *(Figure 16)*. In October 1959, the first anniversary of his takeover was commemorated by a stamp, as was the second anniversary showing a house and a field. The openings of banks and commercial institutes were recorded, as were the opening of the Warsak and Mangla Dam, the first PIA Jet Flight from Karachi to Dacca and the conferences of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Similarly, stamps were issued to mark the Pakistan International Industries Fair in 1962, and the Green Revolution in 1963 by pictures of wheat and a tractor with the inscription 'Freedom from Hunger'.

It was also during Ayub Khan's rule that the first stamp to honour the Armed Forces Day in 1960 was issued *(Figure 17)*. Later, perhaps as a way of expressing his democratic credentials, stamps marked the 1962 Constitution and the centenary of the West Pakistan High Court in 1967; the latter showed a blind-folded female figure holding up the scales. Such stamps served to deny the inherent bias of military rule against human rights, enabled the silencing of the injustices during the regime and ignored the quiet rage that flared up in 1968–69 and led to his removal, and to the separation of the Eastern wing in 1971.

AYUB KHAN ERA: 1958–1968 CE

Figure 16. Human Rights 10-12-1958
Globe and Charter. 1½ Annas
Printers: Thomas De La Rue Designer: Jabbar

Figure 17. Armed Forces Day 10-1-1960
The interservices shield. 14 Annas
Printers and Designer: Thomas De La Rue

Figure 18. Jammu and Kashmir Issue
23-3-1960
Map showing the correct position of Jammu and Kashmir vis-à-vis Pakistan and India. Re 1
Printers & designer: PSPC

Figure 19. Universal Children Day 5-10-1964
A slate shows the first six letters of the Bengali alphabet while a hand is depicted writing Urdu on a wooden slab (takhti). 15 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: N.H. Rizvi

Figure 20. Pakistan's First Atomic Reactor
30-4-1966
Atomic Reactor Building at Islamabad. 15 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Ashfaq Ghani

Figure 21. Islamabad, Capital of Pakistan
29-11-1966
The Secretariat Building, National Flag and portrait of Ayub Khan. 15 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Ashfaq Ghani

Figure 22. Decade of Development 27-10-1968
(Political Reforms) The caption 'Leadership through Basic Democracies' appears in bottom black panel. Three groups of people are shown in front of the Union Council buildings. Beyond this are two smaller groups and further up is the proposed National Assembly building. Rays of light represent power emanates from the people. 10 Paisa
Printers: PSPC
Designer: Mehmooda Khatoon

Figure 23. Save the Monuments of Nubia
30-3-1964
'Temple of Thot' and three standing figures representing Queen Nefertiti (in the middle) and her maids performing a ritual. 13 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Ashfaq Ghani

Figure 24. 6th Anniversary of R.C.D.
31-7-1970
A view from Fethiye in Turkey. Re 1
Printers: PSPC

Figure 25. Family Planning for Prosperity
14-1-1969
Four figures representing a happy family with insignia of 'Family Planning Division'. 15 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Mehmooda Khatoon

Figure 26. First General Assembly Elections for National Assembly 7-12-1970
The flag of Pakistan, with the words 'Elections for National Assembly 7th December 1970'. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin.

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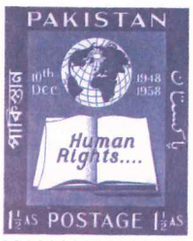

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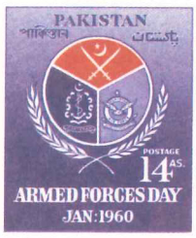

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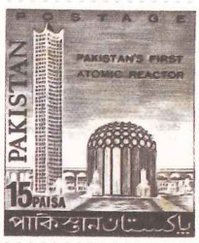

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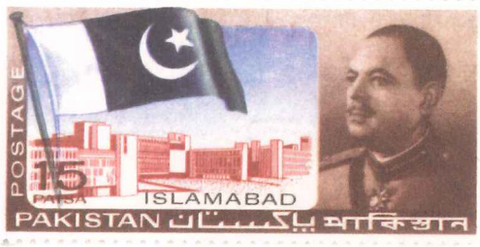

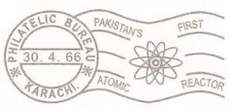

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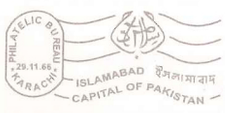

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One of the stamps raised the contentious issue of the 'Correct position of Jammu and Kashmir' *(Figure 18)*, a major source of grievance and continued antagonism between the Independent states of the former Undivided India. Post-1965 war with India, a series of stamps were issued on 25 December 1965 (birthday of the founder of Pakistan) which saluted the army, navy and air force. In 1966 a stamp marked Pakistan's first Atomic Reactor—the sign of a powerful country, able to defend itself *(Figure 20)*. In 1967, a stamp honoured the flag of valour awarded to the cities of Lahore, Sialkot and Sargodha for their role in the 1965 war. In spite of the ambiguous results of this war, Ayub Khan considered it a victory and declared 6 September as a national defence holiday.

In 1966, Ayub Khan and the nation were identified as one in a stamp designed to publicize Islamabad as a new capital *(Figure 21)*—this showed his picture next to the country flag. In October 1968, stamps depicting political, agricultural, industrial, scientific, cultural advancement and defence developments were issued to mark the 'Decade of Development'. A stamp imprinted with the words 'Leadership through Basic Democracies' highlighted political reforms *(Figure 22)*.

II. YAHYA KHAN ERA: 1968–1971 CE *(Figures 23–26)*

The stamps issued during the period of Yahya Khan represent a mixture of issues: the opening of the steel mills and an oil refinery in Chittagong, saving international monuments *(Figure 23)*, the anniversary of the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) between Iran, Pakistan and Turkey *(Figure 24)*, family planning *(Figure 25)*, Pakistan's triumphs in the field of hockey, the centenary of the poet Mirza Ghalib, International Education Year, Asian Productivity Year and the Food and Agricultural Organization conference in Islamabad, and the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference. Other stamps depicted a cement factory in Daudkhel, the Badshahi mosque, and the 2500th anniversary of the Persian Empire. The most important event of this period, the national assembly elections of 1970, was also recorded *(Figure 26)*.

A stamp was issued in March 1971 to observe the Year of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Ironically this was also the year during which East Pakistanis were undergoing genocide. No stamp marked the tragedy of East Pakistan.

ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO ERA: 1972–1977 CE *(Figures 27–34)*

During the era of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the national iconography followed that of previous periods as stamps covered several concerns and included nearly all United Nations' days—Universal Children's Day, Human Rights Day, Literacy Day, World Population Day. This underscored Pakistan's connection with the world community and was evidence of its role in the comity of modern, developed and progressive nations.

In 1972, a stamp acknowledged the land reforms—an indication of Bhutto's professed socialist beliefs; these were instituted but barely implemented. In the same year, a stamp publicized Pakistan's first

Figure 27. Blood Donation 6-9-1972
Two arms represent the donor giving blood collected in bottles in the foreground, while the arm in the background in white represents the need for blood transfusion. Pakistan written in Urdu, Devanagari script and English. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Mehmooda Khatoon

Figure 28. Education Week 1972 15-11-1972
The theme for the design is 'Education for the masses'. A group of children are shown standing in front of a large book. The right page bears the Urdu alphabet while the left page bears the wording 'Education Week'. Pakistan written in Urdu, Devanagri script and English. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Talat Sultana

Figure 29. 90,000 Prisoners of War in India Challenge to World Conscience 18-4-1973
A prison camp shown behind a mesh of barbed wire. At the left, a sad boy is shown anxiously awaiting the return of his father. Pakistan written in Urdu and English. Rs 1.25
Printers: PSPC Designer: Mukhtar Ahmad

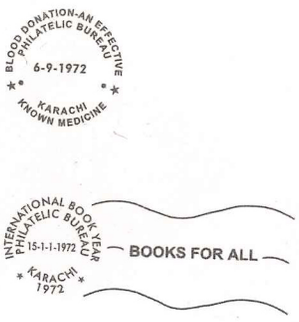
Figure 30. Anniversary Lahore Islamic Summit, 22-2-1975
On the left is the design of the commemorative column proposed to be erected in the front of the Assembly Hall where the second Islamic Summit was held. This is surrounded in concentric circles by in colours of the flags of the countries that participated. On the right is the portrait of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, who was elected the President of the conference. Re 1
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 31. International Women's Year 1975 15-6-1976
The role of women in progress is represented by a young girl engaged in research work in a laboratory. The insignia of 'International Women's Year 1975' appears at the right. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 32. 100 Years of National College of Arts, Lahore (Mayo School of Arts) 15-3-1976
The insignia of the college inside a sun-shaped rosette consisting of a hundred colour diamond shaped rays symbolising the versatility of the arts. The motto of the college appears below the rosette. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 33. Save Moenjodaro 31-5-1976
On the right is a mythological figure taken from a steatite seal of a Unicorn at Moenjodaro. In the background are shown the ruins of Moenjodaro with the stupa of the Kushan period. Bold inscription of the seal appears at the top with the 'UNESCO' emblem at left. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Ilyas Gilani

Figure 34. National Day for Tree Plantation 9-8-1975
A healthy young plant at the right and a few stalks representing dead trees with insect eating away the roots of the dead trees. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Munawar Ahmad



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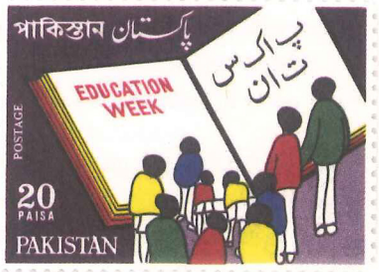

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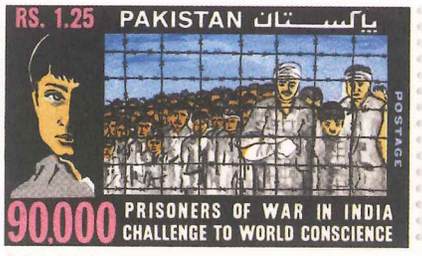

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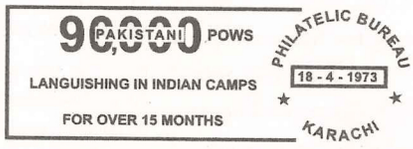

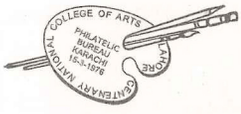

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nuclear power plant in Karachi. Bhutto is credited with the vision to give Pakistan its nuclear power and, after India exploded a nuclear device in the 1970s, is reported to have famously said, 'We will eat grass if we have to, in order to make the A-Bomb'.

In April 1973 Bhutto's government issued a stamp carrying a plea for the release of the 90,000 Prisoners of War (POWs) languishing in India since the fall of Dacca in December 1971 *(Figure 29)*. The caption read: 'Challenge to World Conscience'. No stamp had marked Pakistan's ignominious defeat in the war of 1971. Pictorial history does not capture defeats and shame—only victory and pride.

Achievements celebrated by Bhutto were the Constitution of 1973 and Islamic Summit held in Lahore *(Figure 30)*. The latter stamp showed the proposed column in front of the assembly hall, surrounded by concentric circles in original colours of the flags of the participating countries. On the right was a portrait of Z.A. Bhutto, elected President of the conference, and at the base an inscription in stylized Arabic characters proclaimed that all Muslims were brothers. The same year the Qadianis were declared non-Muslims and lost some of their fundamental rights.

The year 1975 was declared by the UN as the International Women's Year. The state wanted to define itself as modern, futuristic, and liberal in values. Begum Nusrat Bhutto attended the First World Conference on Women in Mexico; a series of stamps depicted women in various professions—working in laboratories *(Figure 31)*, teaching, engaged in research and in Adult Education.

In 1977, a serious challenge was posed to Bhutto's government by a popular movement against rigged elections and by the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) comprising nine religious parties, clamouring for *Nizam-e Mustafa* (System of the Prophet). The then army chief, General Ziaul Haq seized the opportunity to impose martial law and on 5 July 1977, deposed Bhutto. In April 1979 Bhutto was hanged after being convicted in a trial criticized worldwide for being a farce.

4. ZIAUL HAQ ERA: 1977–1988 CE *(Figures 35–55)*

Towards the end of the Bhutto era, religious imagery had started creeping into the national imagination. Measures by the Bhutto government such as establishing a ministry of religious affairs, declaring Friday as the weekly holiday and banning gambling and alcohol had not served to diminish the popular upsurge against the alleged rigged elections of 1977.

During Ziaul Haq's rule, religious iconography gained ascendance and a number of artists turned to calligraphy and religious art. Religious and nationalist human figures began to appear with increasing frequency and included Tipu Sultan, Syed Ahmad Khan *(Figures 35&36)* and Altaf Hussain Hali. One of the earliest stamps issued in 1979, celebrated the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet, and showed the Holy Qur'an, *Masjid-e Nabvi* and the globe *(Figure 37)*. Zia's religious nationalism opposed both Ayub's modernism/progressivism and Bhutto's 'Islamic socialism'. His rule was based on a particular version of Islam propagated by Jamaat-e Islami and

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Pioneers of Freedom 23-3-1979
Figure 35. Tipu Sultan *Rs 10*
Figure 36. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan *Rs 15*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Abdul Rauf

Figure 37. 12 Rabi-ul Awwal 1399 AH 10-2-1979
The Holy Qur'an, Masjid-e Nabvi and the globe. The text over the globe is a verse from the Qur'an which states that 'Say that the Truth has arrived and evil is obliterated'. The Arabic word includes the word 'Haq' meaning Truth, a covert reference to Ziaul 'Haq'. 20 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 38. Anti-Apartheid Year 20-11-1978
Four different races are represented by interwoven coloured strips of black, brown, yellow and white showing unity and brotherhood. Re 1
Printers: PSPC Designer: M.A. Munawar

Figure 39. International Year of Shelter for the Homeless–1987 15-12-1987. *Rs 3*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Sultana Shamim

Figures 40&41. Election 1985 23-3-1985
The ballot box with the ballot paper and the insignia of Election Commission. Minar-e Pakistan and the word 'Democracy' repeated several times. Re 1

Figure 42. Eradicate Narcotics 30-6-1987
Burning of the Poppy Field. Re 1
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Slahuddin

WILDLIFE SERIES—*Printers: Secura Singapore*
Figure 43. Green Turtle 20-6-1981 *40 Paisa*
Designer: M. S. Jamal
Figure 44. The Blind Indus Dolphin
24-4-1982 *40 Paisa Designer: Adil Salahuddin*
Figure 45. Marsh Crocodile 19-5-1983 *Rs 3*
Figure 46. Chinkara 20-6-1983 *Re 1*
Figure 47. Snow Leopard 21-1-1984 *40 Paisa*
Figure 48. Marcopolo Sheep 4-12-1986 *Rs 2*
Designer: M. S. Jamal

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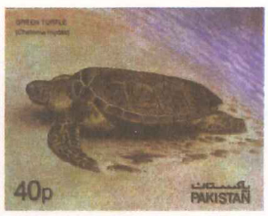

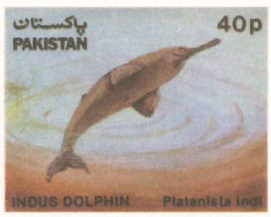

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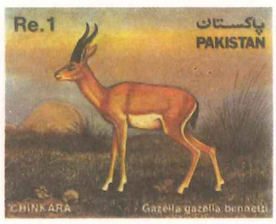

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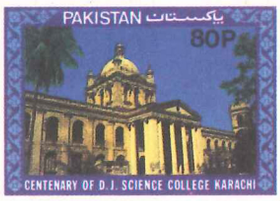

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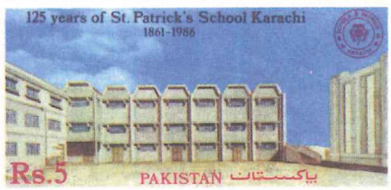

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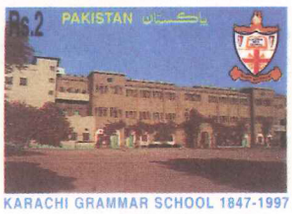

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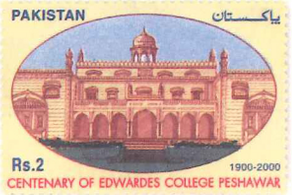

an intensified version of the two-nation theory. In 1981 his government issued a stamp drawing attention to Palestinian Cooperation, and others marked the advent of the fifteenth-century *Hijra*, and highlighted the Afghan jihad and the mass influx of refugees while commemorating the third Islamic Summit Conference in Makkah. Other international causes covered were apartheid and shelter for the homeless *(Figures 38&39)*.

Postage stamps issued in 1983 and 1984 celebrated several achievements in sports—Pakistan's squash championship, yatching victory, and men's hockey triumph, while the women's hockey team was prevented from participating in the game.

In March 1985, a stamp depicting a ballot box documented Zia's partyless-polls, another showed the *Minar-e Pakistan* with the word 'democracy' repeated several times *(Figures 40&41)*. This was reminiscent of Ayub Khan using Basic Democracies to establish his democratic credentials. Also in 1985 a stamp celebrated Pakistan's thirty-eighth Independence Day showed the script in English and Arabic; the Devanagari script which had represented East Pakistan was removed. The study of Arabic was made compulsory, as national identity shifted from a South Asian, subcontinental, geographical one to an Islamic, historical one.

Apart from these, numerous centennial stamps for educational institutions established during the British Raj were issued *(Figures 49–55)*. Postage stamps issued to salute the armed forces on the fortieth anniversary of the Air Force in 1987 contained pictures of several kinds of jets in the national arsenal—Tempest, Hawker Fury, Super Marine Attacker, C130 Hercules, F104 Starfighter, F6, Mirage 81, and Fighting Falcon.

Nationalism of all kinds relies almost as much on exclusions, erasures and forgetting as it does on inclusions, inscriptions and remembering. For example, it was during Zia's period that the judiciary was distorted and weakened through parallel systems, educational curricula were re-shaped beyond recognition in a frenzied bid to 'Islamize' knowledge, arts and culture. Music and dancing were declared heresy and banned in schools, a spate of anti-women legislation was passed, journalists were publicly flogged and lawyers and women were beaten up on the streets as they clamoured for fundamental rights. Stamps, however, are like weapons deployed for self-defence and national glory. They are not allowed to recount tales that rupture the official story of a moral nation on its way to the unfolding of a wonderful destiny.

Figure 49. Hundred years of the University of the Punjab 1882–1982 14-10-1982
Insignia of the University and the Qur'anic verse in Kufic style. 40 Paisa
Printers: PSPC Designer: S. Tanvir Rizvi

Figure 50. Centenary of D.J. Science College 7-11-1987 *80 Paisa*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Sultana Shamim

Figure 51. 125 Years of King Edward Medical College, Lahore 1860–1985 23-7-1985 *Rs 3*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Sultana Shamim

Figure 52. Centenary of Aitchison College, Lahore 1886–1986 3-11-1986 *Rs 2.50*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 53. Centenary of Sind Madressah-tul-Islam, Karachi 1885–1985 1-9-1985 *Rs 2*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 54. 125 Years of Government College, Lahore 21-12-1989 *Rs 6*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Naseeruddin Sheikh

Figure 55. 125 Years of St. Patrick's School, Karachi 1861–1986 29-1-1987 *Rs 5*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

CIVILIAN RULE 1988–1999 CE

Figure 56. 150 Years of Karachi Grammar School 1847–1997 30-12-1997 *Rs 2*

Figure 57. Centenary of Gordon College, Rawalpindi 1893–1993 1-9-1993 *Rs 2*

Figure 58. St Joseph's Convent School (Est. 1862) 8-9-1991 *Rs 5*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 59. 125 Years of Lawrence College, Murree 1860–1985 21-9-1985 *Rs 3*
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 60. Centenary of Edwardes College, Peshawar 1900–2000 24-4-2000 *Rs 2*

August 1988, saw General Ziaul Haq fly into oblivion in one of the C130s proudly displayed on his government's stamps—bringing to an end an eleven-year era of oppression, suppression and suffocation.

In 1986, Benazir Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's indomitable daughter landed in Lahore to a memorable welcome by party supporters. Her Pakistan People's Party won the elections and she became the first woman Prime Minister of a Muslim country. This launched the short era of civilian, elected governments, albeit powerful only to the extent to which an all-powerful military allowed them.

CIVILIAN GOVERNMENTS OF BENAZIR BHUTTO AND NAWAZ SHARIF: 1988–1999 CE *(Figures 56–93)*

Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif alternatively, each twice had a short stint of about two years. Benazir Bhutto was prime minister between 1988 and 1990 and then between 1993 and 1996. Nawaz Sharif became the prime minister as the head of the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) in 1990 and continued in office until 1993. He was prime minister again in 1997 and was deposed by General Pervez Musharraf in 1999.

During Benazir Bhutto's first term, Z.A. Bhutto was resurrected as a national leader and hero after remaining buried under the debris of Zia's military rule. An early stamp observed his tenth death anniversary on 4 April 1989. Again, during her second tenure, a stamp commemorating Bhutto was issued in 1996; it showed his hands raised in the style of the people's politician, with the world and the Pakistani flag in the backdrop.

Benazir's government immortalized the state's achievements in amassing arms and ammunition. In June 1989, it issued stamps to mark twenty-five years of submarine operations, displaying various types of submarines—Daphne, Fleet Snorkel, Agosta—to Pakistanis and the world. Her government, interestingly, also marked the bicentennial of the French Revolution, just as her father's had recorded the American bicentennial.

Other stamps celebrated the anniversary of Pakistan Television *(Figure 61)*, World Food Day, SAARC, South Asian Federation games, Safe Motherhood and rural development, literacy year, world summit for children, and the Year of the Girl Child. Here was a state and a nation committed to the rights of children, mindful of the importance of heritage and focused on rural development and literacy.

In 1990, Benazir Bhutto's government was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq on charges of corruption and misuse of authority. The era of the IJI was ushered in as Nawaz Sharif became the prime minister of Pakistan. The period between 1991 and 1992 saw stamps marking World Population Day (exhibiting social development), Special Olympics, Pakistan's expedition to Antarctica (reflecting science and modernity), Houbara Bustard (emphasizing preservation of endangered species) and the anniversaries of schools like St. Joseph's Convent *(Figure 58)*, and of bank successes like the Muslim Commercial Bank and Asian Development Bank (as a businessman, Nawaz Sharif's concern was to demonstrate the importance of fiscal and economic entities). Even the hundredth

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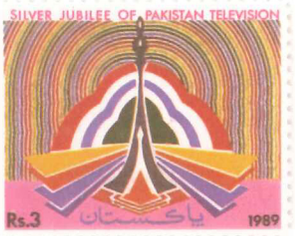

Figure 61. Silver Jubilee of Pakistan Television 26-11-1989 PTV emblem & symbolic transmission rays. Rs 3 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahauddin

Figure 62. Emperor Sher Shah Suri 5-10-1991 Rs 5 Printers: PSPC Designer: Saeed Akhtar

Figure 63. 1000 Years Celebration of Shahnama (Book of Kings) Hakim Abul Qasim Firdousi 27-10-1994 Re 1 Printers: PSPC

Figure 64. Amir Temur 660th Jubilee 8-4-1997 Rs 3 Printers: PSPC

Figure 65. Poets of Pakistan (series) Faiz Ahmed Faiz 86th Birth Anniversary 13-2-1997 Rs 3 Printers: PSPC Designer: Saeed Akhtar

Figure 66. Scientists of Pakistan (series) Dr Abdus Salam (Nobel Laureate) 21-11-1998 Rs 2 Printers: PSPC

Figure 67. Scientists of Pakistan (series) Dr Salimuz Zaman Siddiqui 14-4-1999 Rs 5 Printers: PSPC

Figure 68. Jamshed Nusserwanjee 7-1-1988 Portrait of the Mayor of Karachi, Member of Sindh Legislative Assembly. In the background is the KMC building. Rs 3 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 69. Painters of Pakistan (series) Haji Muhammad Sharif 1989–1978 Master of Miniature Paintings 24-12-1991 Re 1 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 70. Birth Centenary of Syed Ahmed Shah Patrus Bukhari 1898–1998 1-10-1998 Rs 5

Figure 71. Painters of Pakistan (series) Ustad Allah Bux 24-12-1991 Re 1 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 72. Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan Music Maestro 16-8-1999 Rs 2 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

Figure 73. Painters of Pakistan (series) Shakir Ali 1916-1975 Pioneer of Modern Art Movement in Pakistan. 19-4-1990 Re 1 Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahuddin

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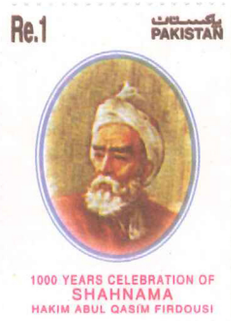

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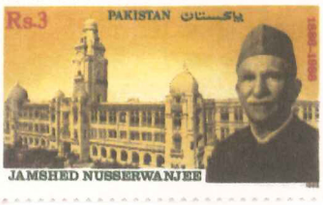

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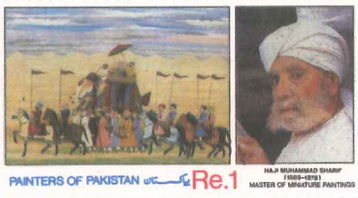

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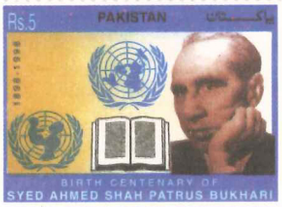

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anniversary of American Express Travellers' Cheques was marked by a postage stamp in 1991! Royalty was remembered: Emperor Sher Shah Suri (*Figure 62*) known for building highways, a passion shared by Nawaz himself, was depicted on a stamp. Sports nationalism ran deep—a stamp celebrated the World Cup Cricket victory of 1992, and every subsequent Pakistani sports triumph.

Nawaz Sharif was widely known to have been politically nurtured by Zia, and inherited the latter's preoccupation with religion. Stamps denoting the importance of Islamic cultural heritage and Islamic scouts in 1992 were issued.

Assuming office for the second time in 1997, Nawaz Sharif issued stamps about famous men including Amir Temur or Tamerlane (*Figure 64*), Iqbal and Rumi. Stamps marked the summit of the OIC (Oil producing Islamic countries), and the centenary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in December 1998.

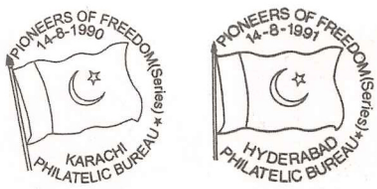
In 1993 Nawaz Sharif's first government was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan who again invoked the Eighth Constitutional Amendment. Sharif fought the case in court and won but both he and the President were made to leave at the behest of the military. Elections were called and Benazir Bhutto, the leader of the largest party, assumed office as prime minister, for the second time.

During Benazir Bhutto's second tenure, the government issued stamps which addressed issues deemed vital by the global community. These included bio-diversity, heritage, International Conference of Writers and Intellectuals, fiftieth anniversary of the UN, prisoners of conscience—those prominent in the freedom movement (*Figures 74–93*)—amongst many others.

Special stamps emphasized the importance of women's contribution to the national economy, their rights and their role in national development. Benazir Bhutto presented a comprehensive report on women's issues in Pakistan during the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing, China. A stamp marked the occasion, and others depicted women in various professions.

Benazir Bhutto attempted to retain a modicum of military support: in September 1995, her government issued stamps in memory of Major Raja Aziz Bhatti and Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed (*Figures 94&95*), winner of the highest military award, *Nishan-e Haider*. Her government was, however, dismissed in November 1996 by her own President—Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, who once again used the Eighth Constitutional Amendment's Article 58 (2)b. A caretaker government was once again set-up and elections were called in 1997. Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (N) won a two-thirds majority in parliament, enough to successfully strike off the notorious Article 58 (2)b, with the help of the opposition, now represented by Benazir Bhutto.

In July 1997, Nawaz Sharif's government issued a stamp to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Atomic Energy Commission. The symbol of



Figures 74–93. Pioneers of Freedom (series)
14-8-1990, 14-8-1991 CE
Portrait Sketches. Re 1
Printers: PSPC Designer: Saeed Akhtar

Figure 74. Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah 1876–1948 CE.

Figure 75. Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah 1893–1967 CE

Figure 76. Allama Muhammad Iqbal 1877–1938 CE

Figure 77. Chaudhry Rahmat Ali 1897–1951 CE

Figure 78. Liaquat Ali Khan 1895–1951 CE

Figure 79. Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan 1905–1990 CE

Figure 80. Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung 1905–1944 CE

Figure 81. Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad 1914–1973 CE

Figure 82. Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy 1893–1963 CE

Figure 83. Syed Ameer Ali 1849–1928 CE

Figure 84. Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum Khan c.1863–1937 CE

Figure 85. Aga Khan III 1877–1957 CE

Figure 86. Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar 1878–1931 CE

Figure 87. Sir Adamjee Dawood 1880–1948 CE

Figure 88. Sir Abdullah Haroon 1872–1942 CE

Figure 89. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar 1899–1958 CE

Figure 90. Mir Jaffer Khan Jamali c.1911–1967 CE

Figure 91. Nawab Salimullah 1884–1915 CE

Figure 92. Khawaja Nazimuddin 1894–1964 CE

Figure 93. Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah 1879–1948 CE

74–77.

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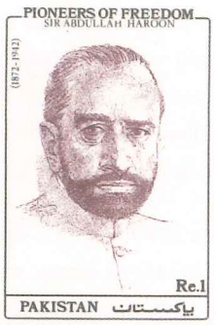
82–85.

86–89.



90–93.

the peace, dove, ensconced within signs suggesting wheat or corn seems to imply that Pakistan would use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes including fulfilling its food requirements. Pakistan's intentions were put to the test a year later, in May 1998, after India forced Pakistan to come out of the nuclear closet. A commemorative stamp was issued in 1999 marking the first anniversary of the six explosions of 1998.

In 1997, a range of stamps celebrated the fiftieth year of Pakistan's independence. These depicted Allama Iqbal, the Pakistan armed forces and the Pakistan motorway—symbols of nationalism, militarism and development—ideologies essential for a government in Pakistan to be popular or acceptable.

Some of the other significant events commemorated during Nawaz Sharif's second term included the fiftieth anniversaries of the Geneva conventions and of the People's Republic of China, and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Islamic Development Bank. Stamps honoured personalities—the poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz *(Figure 65)*, Pakistan's only Nobel Laureate, Dr Abdus Salam *(Figure 66)*, Professor Salimuz Zaman Siddiqui *(Figure 67)* as well as musician Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali *(Figure 72)*.

On 12 October 1999 General Pervez Musharraf, Chief of Army Staff, removed Nawaz Sharif and assumed office himself.

PERVEZ MUSHARRAF ERA: 1999–2008 CE *(Figures 96–106)*

General Musharraf consolidated his hold on power, assuming six of the most powerful posts in the country—including those of Chief of Army Staff, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief Executive and President.

Like other military rulers, General Musharraf associated his rule with democracy and human rights. His government held a two-day human rights show in Islamabad, and issued stamps commemorating the Convention on Human Rights and Dignity in April 2000. He was eagerly embraced by many among the liberal democratic intelligentsia who were wary of Nawaz Sharif's impending Shariat Bill.

Musharraf organized the Ideas 2000 Defence exhibition and seminar, and honoured the event by issuing a stamp with the Pakistan flag prominently displayed.

The Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations, 2001, coincided with the year of 9/11. In October 2001, a stamp stressed the importance of the inter-civilizational dialogue. The year was also declared the Quaid Year and a series of stamps portrayed M. A. Jinnah reviewing troops, taking oath as Governor General, and at the opening ceremony of the State Bank of Pakistan. This was the forerunner of the 'Pakistan First' ideology propounded by Musharraf. The following year was declared the Iqbal Year. The stamp issued showed two pictures of the poet-philosopher in traditional and in modern garb, to emphasize the dream of Pakistan as a modern state, which honoured old traditions.

Figure 94. Nishan-e Haider (series)
Raja Aziz Bhatti Shaheed 6-9-1995 Rs 1.25

Figure 95. Nishan-e Haider (series)
Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed 6-9-1995 Rs 5

Figure 96. Help Earthquake Victims
27-10-2005 Rs 100 (Miniature Sheet)
Special postage stamps were issued to raise funds for the victims of the earthquake in the North of Pakistan in 2005. All the proceeds of the issue were to be contributed to the President's Relief Fund.

Figure 97. 400th Anniversary of Sri Guru Arjun Dev Jee (Gurdwara Dera Sahib, Lahore)
16-6-2006 Rs 5
Printers: PSPC Designer: Faizi Ameer Siddiqui

Figures 98–105. Painters of Pakistan (series)
14-8-2006
Each stamp bears the portrait of the artist next to one of their painting. Rs 4
Printers: PSPC Designer: Adil Salahauddin
Figure 98. Sadequain 1930–1987 CE
Figure 99. Laila Shahzada 1926–1994 CE
Figure 100. Ali Imam 1924–2002 CE
Figure 101. Ahmed Parvez 1926–1979 CE
Figure 102. Anna Molka Ahmed 1917–1994 CE
Figure 103. Zubeida Agha 1922–1997 CE
Figure 104. Bashir Mirza 1941–2000 CE
Figure 105. Zahoorul Akhlaque 1941–1999 CE

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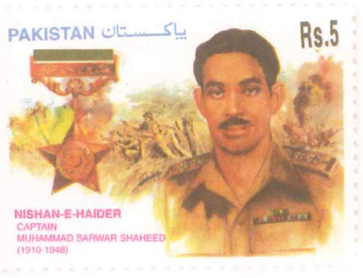

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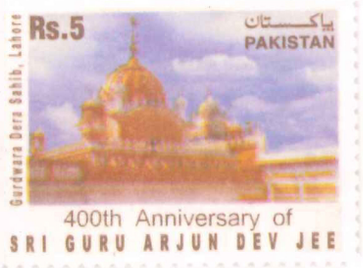

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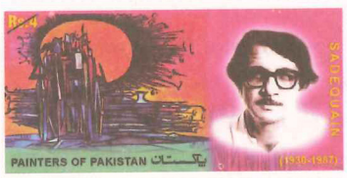

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Other stamps commemorated the fiftieth anniversaries of Pakistan–Japan relations and of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences, and those marking the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Pakistan–UAE friendship, Pakistan–China relations, and those with Turkmenistan. Another prominent series 'Painters of Pakistan' celebrated the art of the country in 2006 *(Figures 98–105)*. It is, however, nationalist and military imagery that dominates the pictorial representation of Pakistan under General Pervez Musharraf.

RECURRING MOTIFS IN THE NATIONAL IMAGINATION

The history of Pakistan has been presented pictorially and iconographically through postage stamps. Through these widely circulated, inexpensive and mobile forms of national imagery, specific messages were produced and disseminated to the people. These were of modernity, development, science, power, military strength, defence and glory. They created a sense of pride in the nation and state.

In the early years, however, the sense of a separate nation was less solid, the borders more fluid, and the memory of shared histories and cultures still fresh. There seemed to be no urgency to instil the love of patriots, national heroes and martyrs. While the identification with India was erased, Pakistan was not yet linked to the Arab World, to Islam or the national, religious and military iconography.

Political signs and symbols like the motorway, Basic Democracies, dams, international women's conferences and establishment of banks were designed to fetch political currency. Other signs were more constant, recurrent, relatively stable and used across governments. These included Jinnah, Iqbal, the national flag and Independence Day; they belong essentially to the state and nation and were invested with intense nationalist passion; as such their value is enormous and undying.

The flag, with its crescent and star, was the most widely used symbol throughout the years since independence. The flag evokes strong emotions—love, pride, freedom and continuity. It can be combined with virtually any other symbol or sign to give the latter more power. It is potent when used with the military—alongside guns, tanks, fighter jets and submarines. When combined with nuclear power, the symbol is lethal. In short, it is ubiquitous.

Jinnah is another powerful icon *(Figures 74 and 106)*. He is employed in his myriad manifestations—dressed in *achkan* or *sherwani* with the famous Jinnah cap (by the traditionalists) or in his immaculate three-piece suit sitting in his law library wearing a monocle (by the modernists)—especially on Independence Day, 14 August, and his birthday, 25 December.

Allama Iqbal, too, is frequently depicted by different governments, most often on the Republic Day of Pakistan, 23 March, the Independence Day, and his birthday, 9 November. Military governments are particularly partial to him because of the images of birds of prey like *shaheen* (eagle) or *uqaab* (hawk) in his poetry and the war-like content of his

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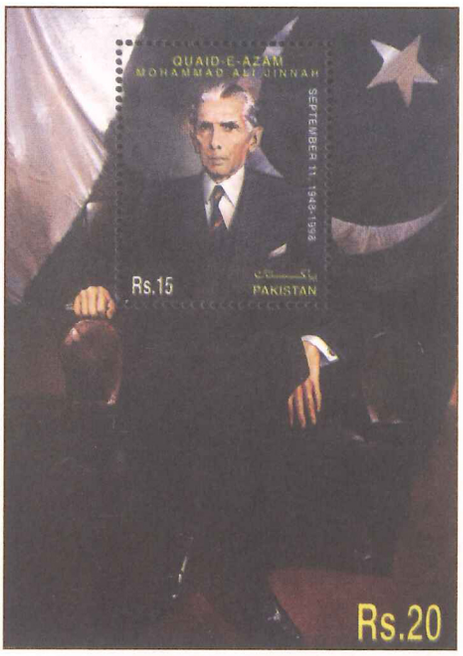

Figure 106. Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah 11-9-1998 Rs 20 Souvenir sheet issued on the Founder's fiftieth death anniversary.

107.

Figure 107. The logo of the Pakistan Post in use until 2007. It consists of the trumpet (an insignia of the House of Thurn and Taxis, a mail carrying family from Germany who were known throughout Europe), a star, and a crescent within which are placed the words 'Khidmat' (Service), 'Diyanat' (Honesty) and 'Amanat' (Safe-keeping); while a ribbon-like scroll has 'Pakistan Dawk' written in Urdu in reverse.

The following types of stamps are used for the prepayment of postage in Pakistan.

Definitive stamps are meant for general postal use, normally issued after long intervals. They are of different denomination depending on the value of item and are printed in unlimited quantity.

Commemorative stamps are issued on national and international events. They are printed occasionally with the highest denomination being Rs 75 and the lowest Rupee 1.

Special stamps are issued on a particular theme/subject of interest.

Service Stamps are definitive stamps with the word 'Service' is overprinted on them and are used only on official letters/correspondence by government departments.

later poetry. Iqbal is also invoked in his role as a poet and scholar when knowledge and learning institutions are commemorated.

On the national Independence Day, stamps are issued to mark Pakistan's emergence from India's reluctant womb. All the most powerful signs—Jinnah, Iqbal and the flag—are combined on that day to remind the nation of its existence.

National history is written in many ways. Monuments, documents, sculptures and artifacts in a museum are all part of a narrative. However, not all can have access to some of the expensive items like paintings, especially if privatized. Everyone may not be able to visit museums. But everyone can access a small postage stamp available at any post office. It is the easiest and simplest way to write the national story in colourful pictures that even the illiterate can read.

REFERENCE

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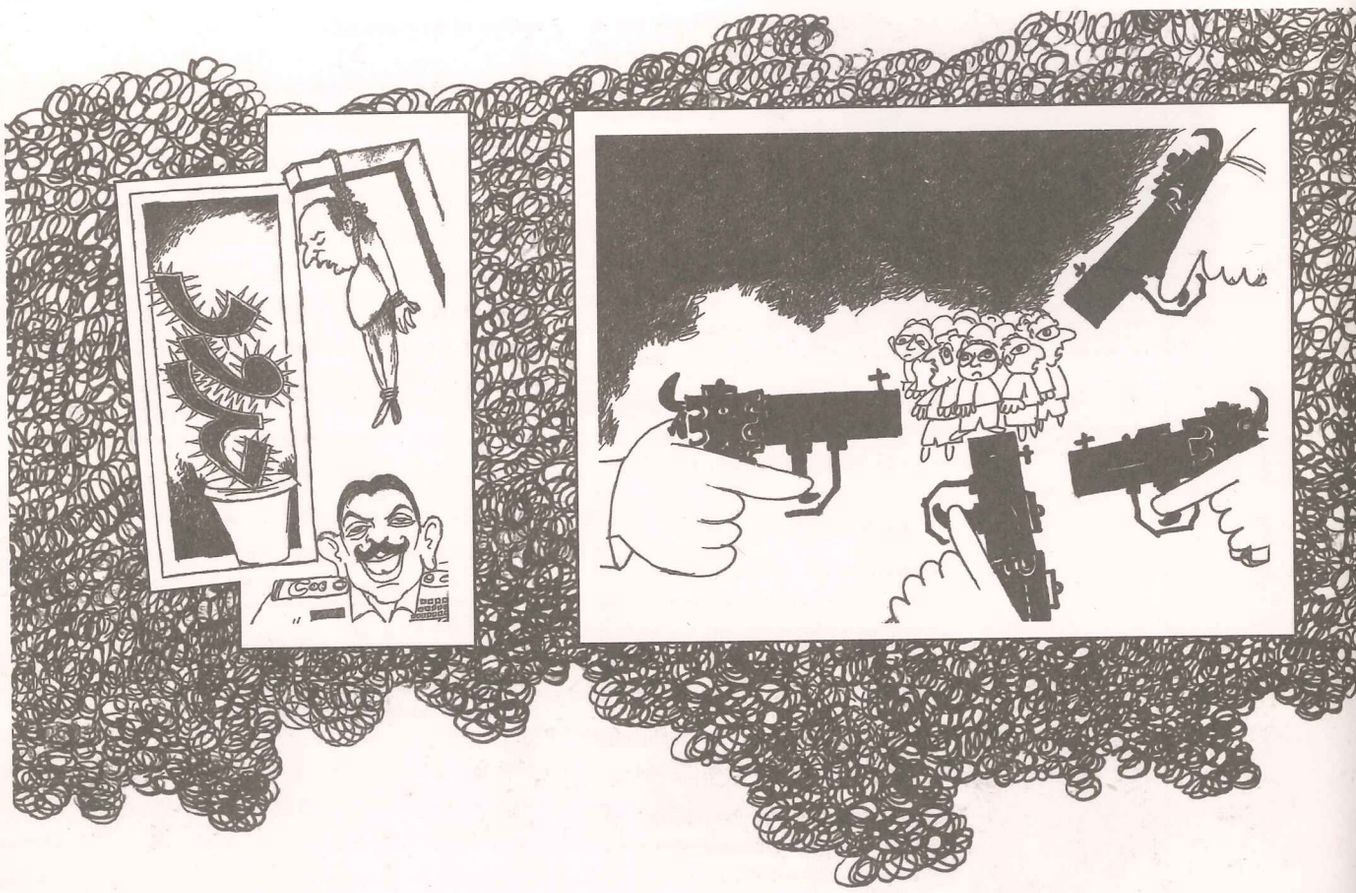

DRAWING POLITICAL CHANGE

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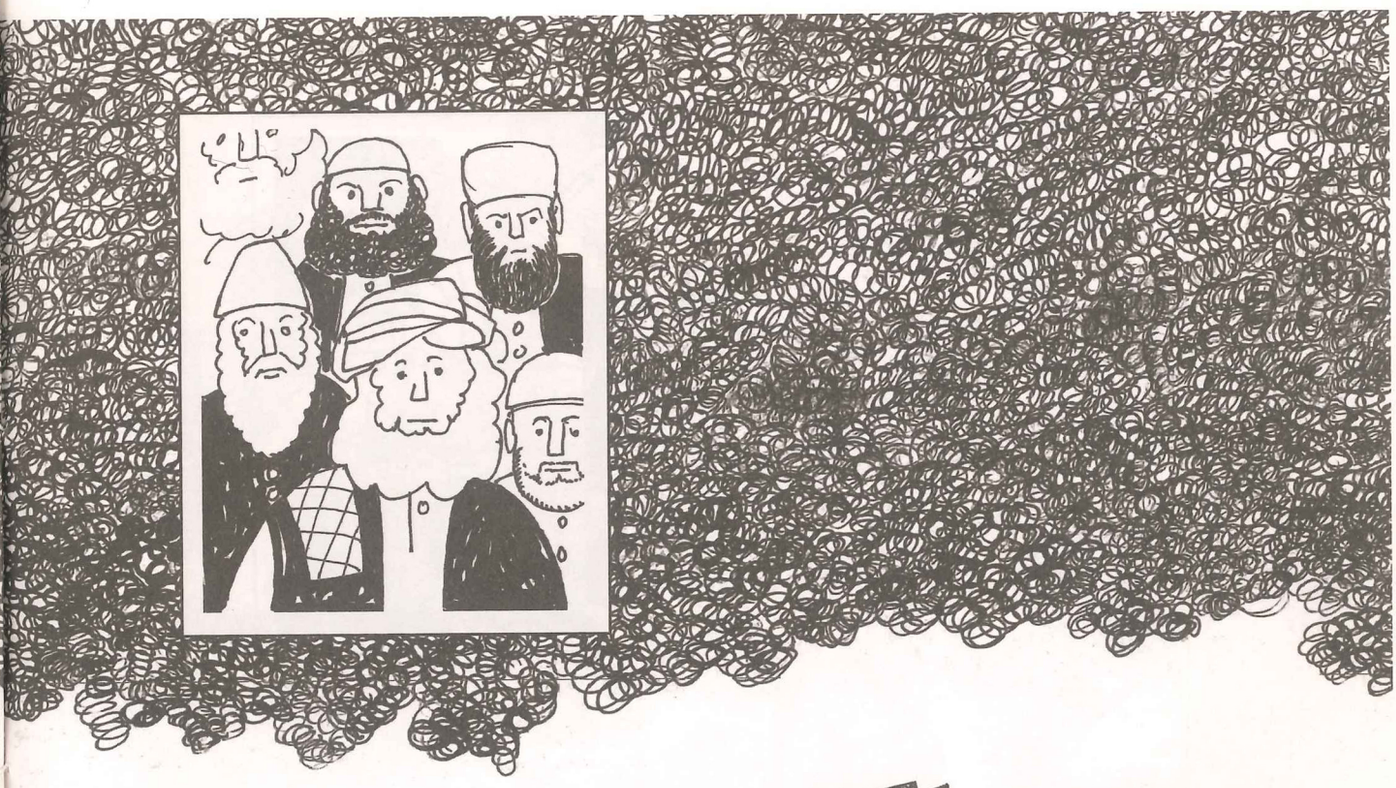

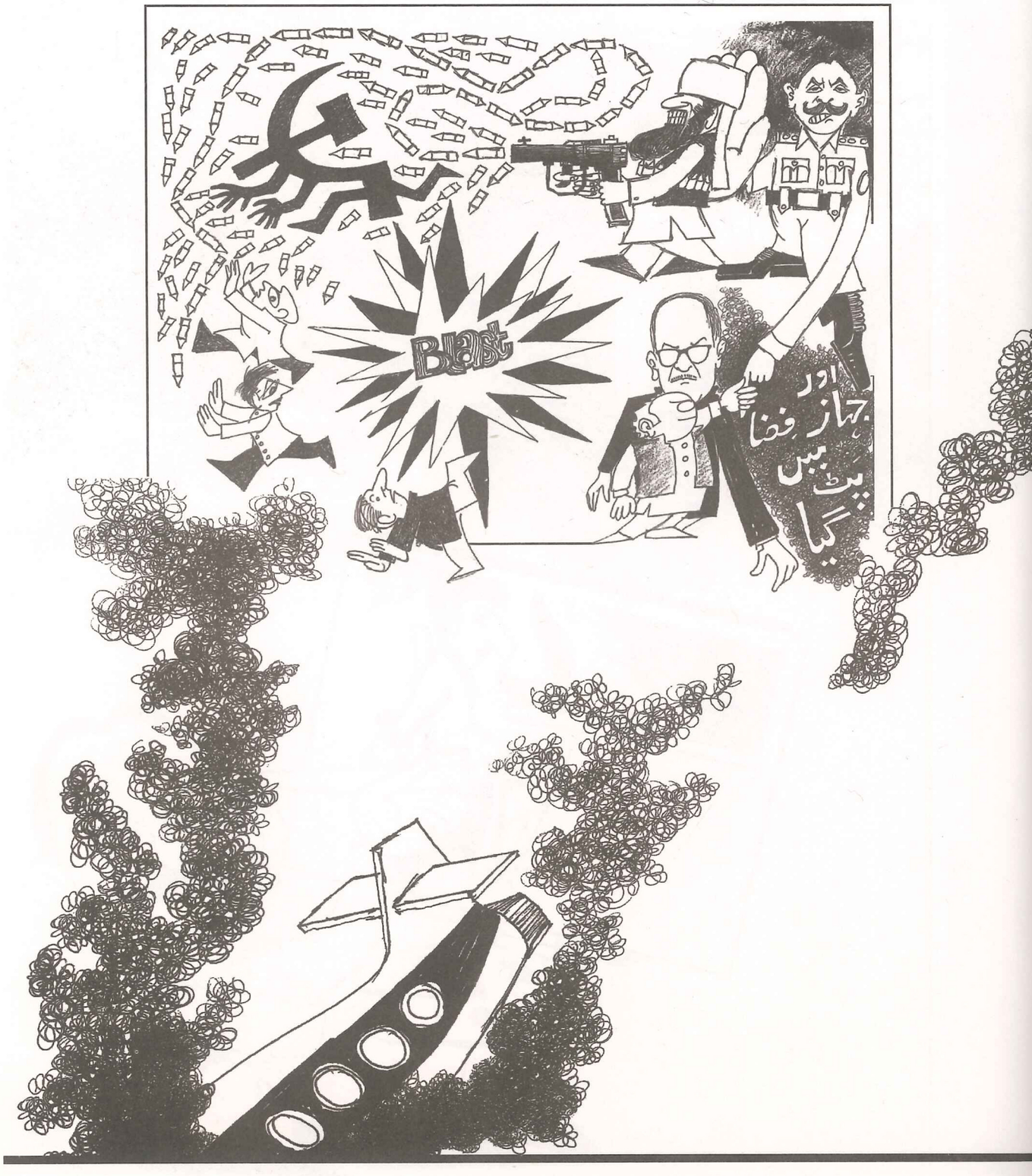
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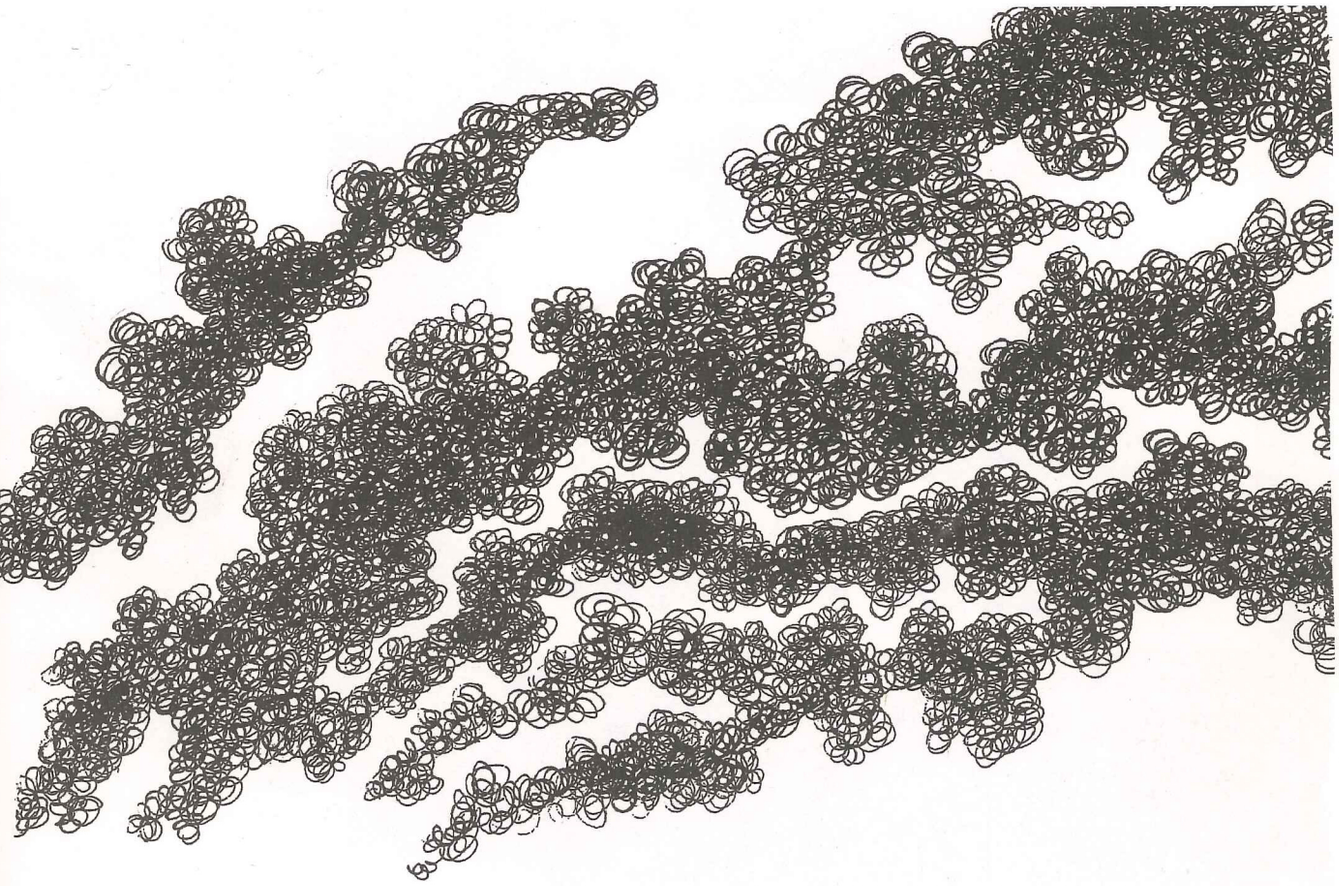

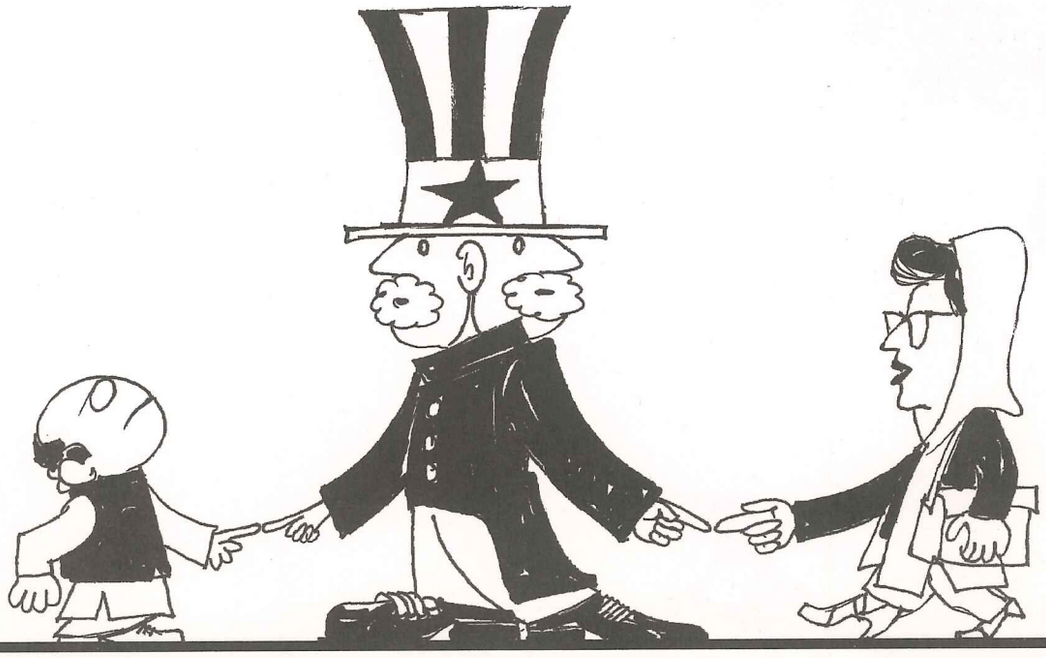

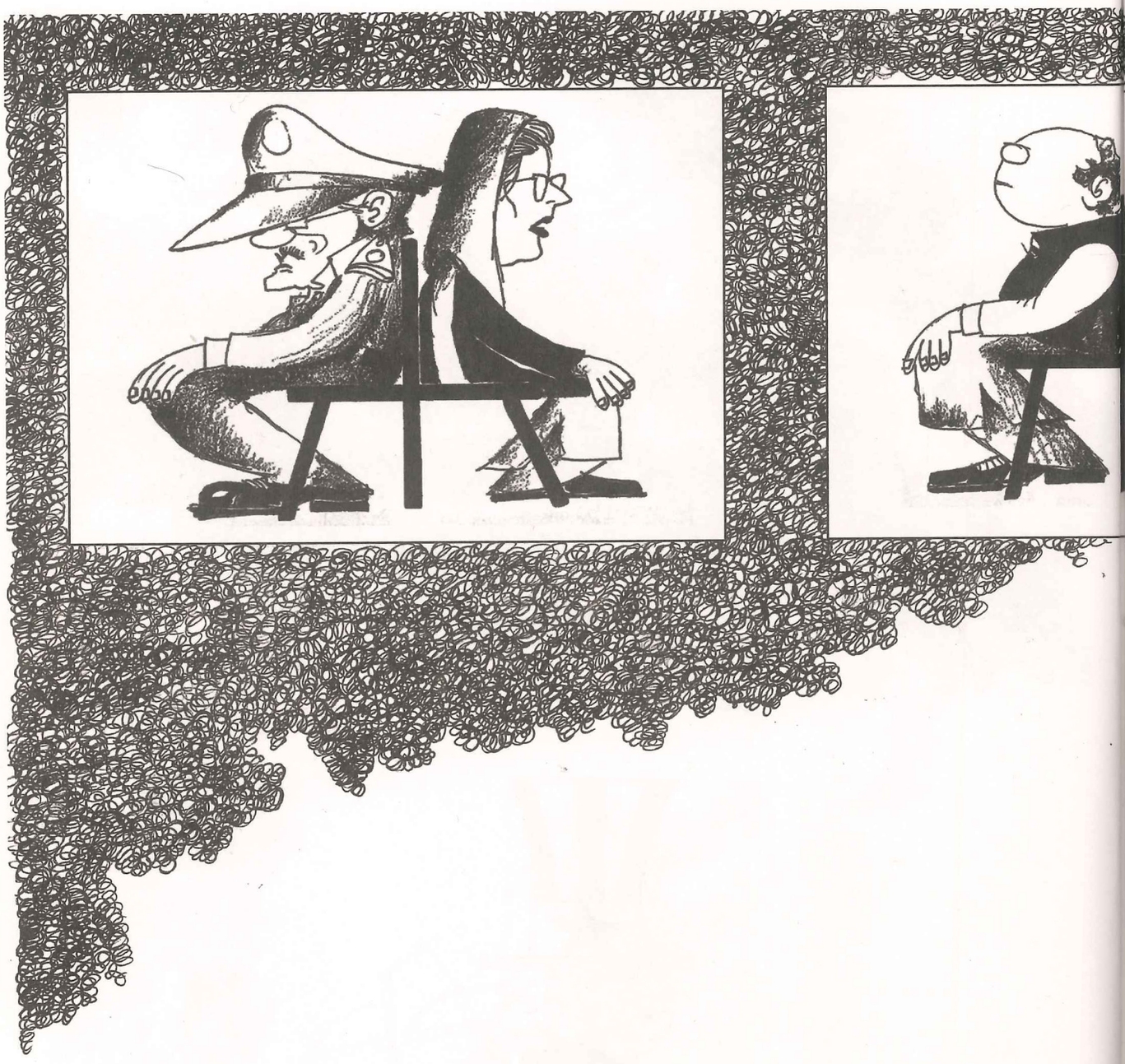

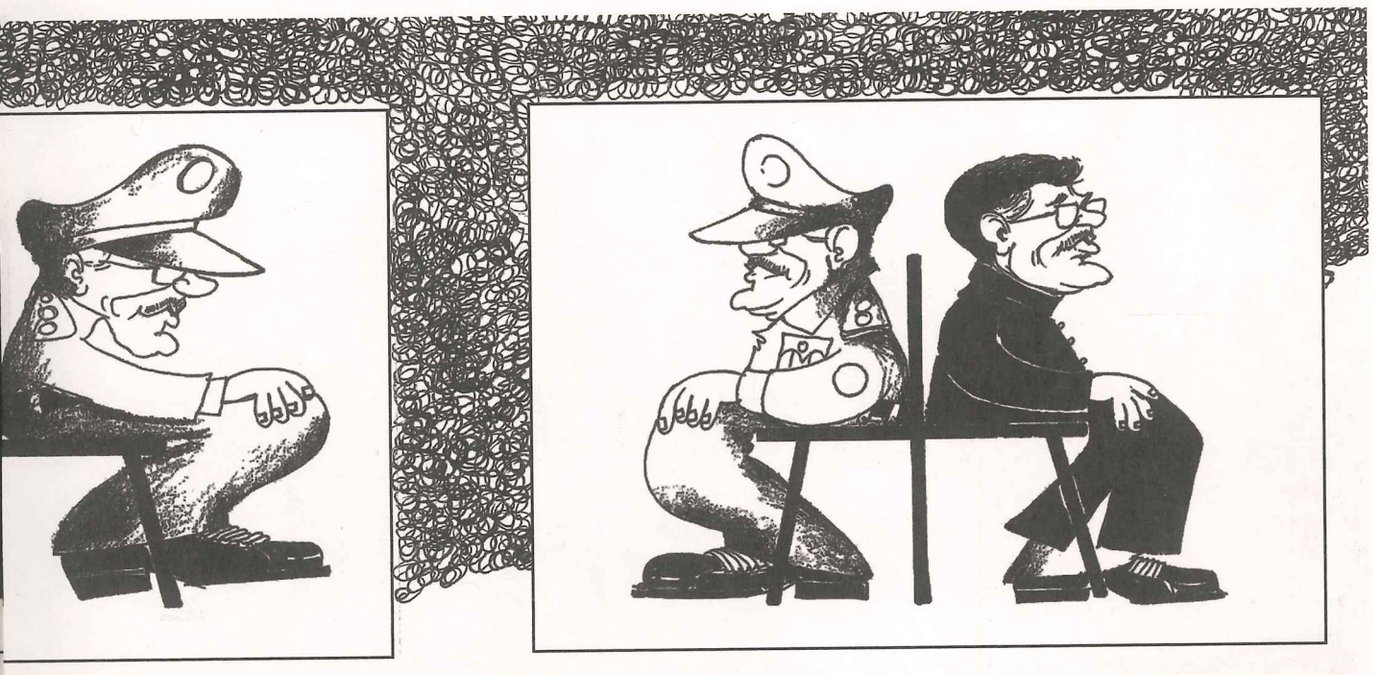

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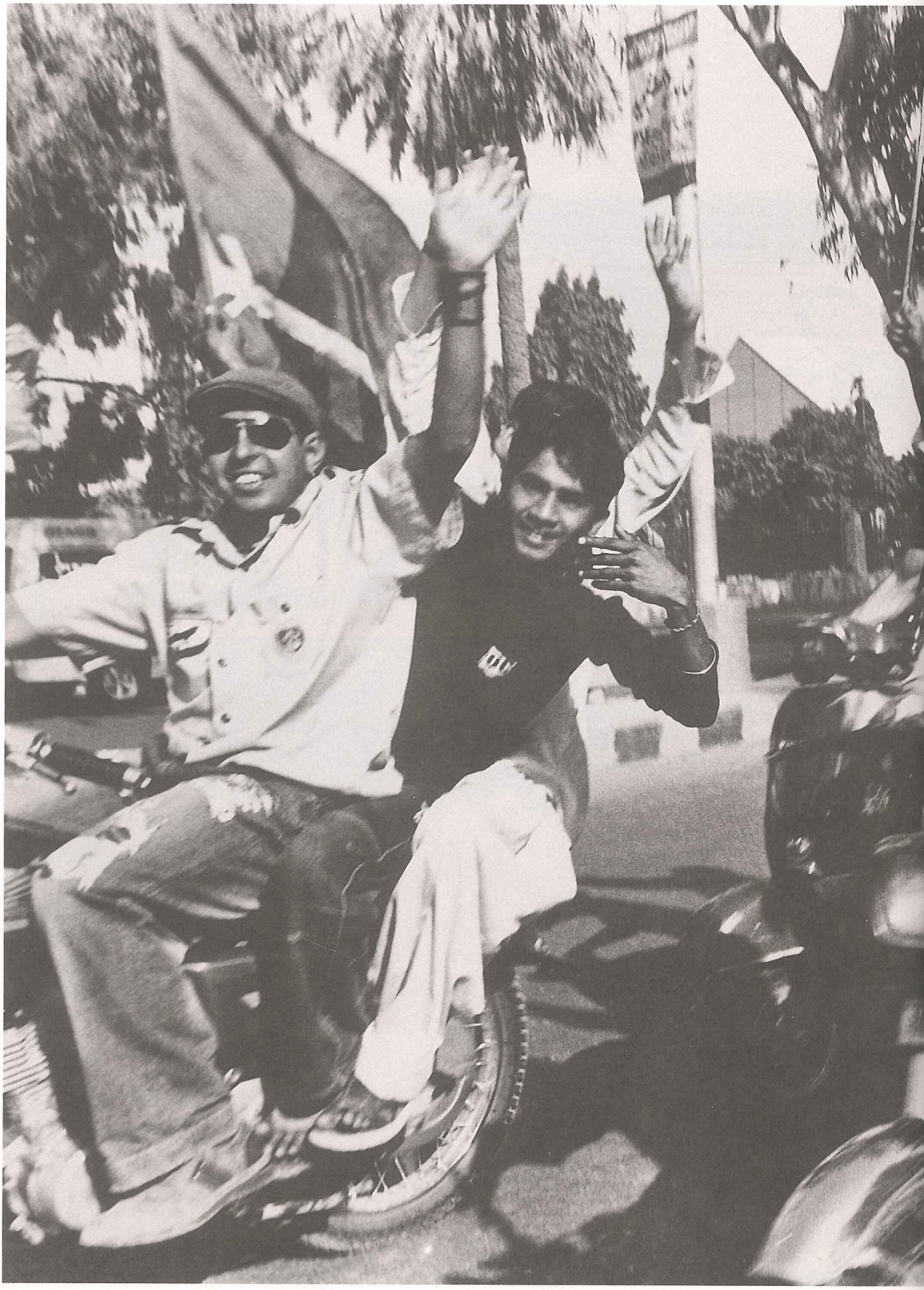
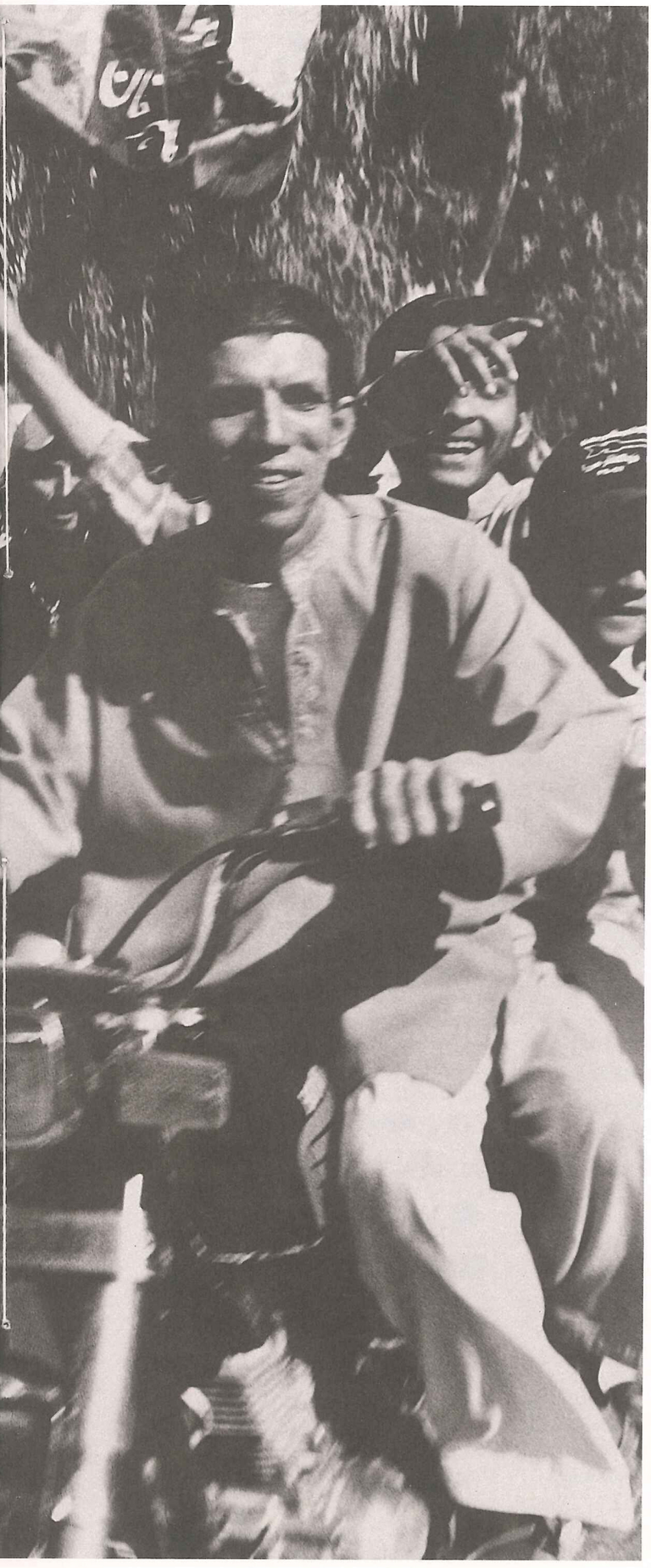


SAIMA ZAIDI



THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

The Visual Campaigns of Political Parties in Pakistan for Elections 2008

SAIMA ZAIDI

Election campaigns are a unique exercise in precipitating and sustaining a concentrated interface between two entities, the political party and its voters. The challenge in Pakistan, is to effectively communicate with a plural, heterogeneous society constituting millions of voters,[i] who not only speak different languages and dialects but also have varying degrees of literacy, both in reading and decoding visual symbols.

Political parties understand that their election campaigns must act to rally the electorate and instil solidarity. One way of achieving this is by ensuring the consistent graphic application of the election symbol, party colours, iconography and slogans. This is an endeavour that requires substantial financial resources as a party's street power is measured by its ability to swamp the public space with its presence.

This essay depicts and discusses the visual election campaigns of several parties and the design of the posters and the ballot paper printed by the Election Commission of Pakistan ahead of the 2008 elections. It also concentrates on how this phenomenon played out in the urban public space in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and the twin cities of Rawalpindi-Islamabad.[ii]

These elections and their campaigns were historically significant because of at least three major developments. First, they were taking place after eight years of military rule. Second, two major political leaders, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, had returned from long exiles to run their party campaigns, something they were unable to do for the 2002 elections. Third, the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007, a few days before the scheduled elections on 8 January 2008[iii] had an unprecedented effect on the electorate.

i. Eighty million citizens were registered as voters in the computerized electoral rolls of 2006–2007.

ii. The campaigns had to be swift and hard-hitting as they can only start after the last date for the withdrawal of nominations and have to end 48 hours before the midnight of the day of the election itself—16 February.

iii. The elections were postponed to 18 February 2008 as a result of the assassination.

STAMPING THE SYMBOL

Just as a word can be assigned a variety of meanings, a symbol can have a multiplicity of meanings, leaving it up to the observer to award it a particular or the most appropriate interpretation—depending on the context, as well as, his knowledge and experience.[1] This is demonstrated by signage for urban public spaces which conveys its message through design elements that are condensed to basic forms. For example, the silhouette of a woman wearing a dress, which is globally accepted as the sign for the ladies' restroom,[i] is in itself 'neither universal nor self-evident' but has managed to 'transcend national boundaries and unify global life',[2] thus communicating across languages and cultures.

As with any symbol, meanings may be attributed to a political symbol which can be learnt through repeated exposure. For example, the abstract symbol of the swastika[ii] which has been referred to as 'the most effective identity system in history'[3] and which Adolf Hitler claimed to have personally designed, was an ancient symbol of good fortune. It later came to represent anti-Semitism and its display became prohibited by constitutional law in Germany.

The symbols associated with the politics and elections of Pakistan have acquired meaning in much the same way. The Election Symbols 2007–2008 poster printed by the Election Commission (EC) *(Figure 3)* shows symbols which appear to be an arbitrary assortment of inanimate and animate objects with no necessary or obvious political connection. A majority of them have been derived from a *qaeda* (a reader) that assigns an alphabet to an object from everyday life, such as fruit and animals, cleverly weaving pictures and words, the visual and the verbal *(Figure 2)*. Employing these basic images as election symbols aid recognition and recollection in a country where literacy levels are low. It is important to note, however, that countries with higher literacy rates also utilize symbols. In the United States for example, the elephant and the donkey represent the Republican and the Democratic parties, respectively.[iii]

The EC symbols are reduced to line drawings in a single colour to facilitate mass production. Of those available at the Election Commissioner's office, parties select symbols which best represent their ideology or are most likely to appeal to their target electorate base *(Figures 4–11)*. Certain symbols are exploited because of different potential meanings for e.g. the Muttahida Majlis-e Amal (MMA), an alliance of six right-wing religious

i. The man and woman symbols belong to an international hieroglyphics of public information which have roots in a system called Isotype (International System of Typographic Picture Education) devised by philosopher and social scientist Otto Neurath in the 1920s. The system encompasses people, places, objects and actions.

ii. This graphic symbol is to be found in almost every ancient and primitive cult all over the world. It is the synthesis of two symbols of independent force: the (Greek) cross with arms of equal length and the cross with four arms appearing to rotate in the same direction and its implications are very wide, variously representing the supreme deity, association with agriculture and with the points of the compass and as a specific sign, denoting rotation about an axis. Also depicted in the Indus Valley seals *(see page 321)*.[4]

iii. Thomas Nast, a cartooning legend, popularized these symbols that originated from a political cartoon in the 1870s.

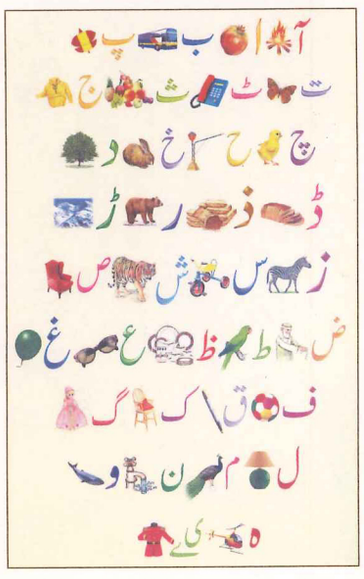
Pakistan is unique as it is a country that was *voted* into existence. In the elections of 1945–6, the central issue of the All-India Muslim League's campaign was the demand for Pakistan. The party's resounding victory among Muslim voters helped to legitimize its claim to represent the Muslims of India, as well as its demand for the establishment of Pakistan as a separate nation.

In the sixty-one years since Pakistan gained independence in 1947, eight general elections have taken place, and the country has experienced thirty-one years of military rule. It is important not to equate holding elections and the expansion of 'representation' with 'democratization'. In 1970, after eleven months of election campaigning, 1570 candidates from 25 parties canvassed across the width and breadth of East and West Pakistan. Only ten of these parties ended up with seats in the National Assembly.[5] By the 2008 elections, Pakistan had expanded to 342 constituencies in the National Assembly for which 2038 candidates contested from 73 parties of which only 12 parties ended up with seats.

Figure 1 (Pages 226&227): Supporters cheering and waving on their way to the polling station on the day of elections, 18 February 2008.

Figure 2 (Below). The end page of a reader 'Fun to learn series Urdu alphabet'. A series for early learning, ideal for toddlers & preschool children, Caravan Book House, Lahore (ages 2+).

Figure 3. Election Symbols 2007–2008 Poster printed by the Election Commission office. Prior to each election, political parties apply to the EC for the allocation of symbols. Generally the parties receive the symbols they request or had received in the previous elections. If two or more parties request the same symbol then lots are drawn.



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ELECTION SYMBOLS 2007-08

انتخابی نشانات ۲۰۰۷-۰۸ء

تیر 1. ARROW	تتلی 16. BUTTERFLY	مکا 31. FIST	جگ 46. JUG	ریکٹ 61. RACKET	بارہ سنگھا 75. STAG	پگڑی 90. TURBAN	بیل گاڑی 105. BULLOCK CART	مرغی 120. HEN	خرگوش 135. RABBIT
کلہاڑا 2. AXE	موم بتی 17. CANDLE	مچھلی 32. FISH	پتنگ 47. KITE	ریلوے انجن 62. RAILWAY ENGINE	گلاس 76. TUMBLER	چھتری 91. UMBRELLA	اونٹ 106. CAMEL	ہاکی 121. HOCKEY	ریڈیو 136. RADIO
بلا 3. BAT	کار 18. CAR	گلدان 33. FLOWER VASE	چاقو 48.KNIFE	رکشا 63. RICKSHA	میز 77. TABLE	کنواں 92. WELL	بلی 107. CAT	مکان 122. HOUSE	پستول 137. REVOLVER
گھنٹی 4. BELL	ٹوپی 19. CAP	فٹ بال 34. FOOT BALL	کرندی 49. TROWEL (KRANDI)	انگوٹھی 64. RING	ٹیبل لیمپ 78. TABLE LAMP	پہیہ 93. WHEEL	مکئی 108. CORN	چابی 123. KEY	پیچ 138. SCREW
سائیکل 5. BICYCLE	چراغ 20. CHIRAGH (LAMP)	فوارہ 35. FOUNTAIN	سیڑھی 50. LADDER	بیلن 65. ROLLER OF WOOD	تختی 79. TAKHTI	سیٹی 94. WHISTLE	چاند 109. CRESCENT	بھنڈی 124. LADY FINGER	سلیٹ 139. SLATE
کشتی 6. BOAT	کرسی 21. CHAIR	ہار 36. GARLAND	لالٹین 51. LANTERN	گلاب 66. ROSE	نلکا 80. TAP	دستی گھڑی 95. WRIST WATCH	تاج 110. CROWN	پتہ 125. LEAF	چڑیا 140. SPARROW
بوتل 7. BOTTLE	چارپائی 22. CHARPAI	غلیل 37. GHULAIL	لیٹر بکس 52. LETTER BOX	قینچی 67. SCISSORS	چائے دانی 81. TEAPOT	واسکٹ 96. WAIST COAT	دروازہ 111. DOOR	آم 126. MANGO	ستارہ 141. STAR
پیالہ 8. BOWL	گھڑیاں 23. CLOCK	بندوق 38. GUN	تالا 53. LOCK	اسکوٹر 68. SCOOTER	ٹیلی فون 82. TELEPHONE	ہوائی جہاز 97. AEROPLANE	ڈھول 112. DRUM	نقشہ 127. MAP	ٹارچ 142. TORCH
پل 9. BRIDGE	کوٹ 24. COAT	ہینڈ پمپ 39. HAND PUMP	لوٹا 54. LOTA	سلائی مشین 69. SEWING MACHINE	ٹیلی ویژن 83. TELEVISION	الماری 98. ALMIRAH	بطخ 113. DUCK	ماچس 128. MATCH BOX	مینار 143. TOWER 3.
کتاب 10. BOOK	کنگھا 25. COMB	ہتھوڑا 40. HAMMER	لاؤڈ اسپیکر 55. LOUDSPEAKER	درانتی 69-A. SICKLE	شیر 84. TIGER	سیب 99. APPLE	عقاب 114. EAGLE	تیل کا چولہا 129. OIL STOVE	ٹائپ رائٹر 144. TYPEWRITER
برش 11. BRUSH	گائے 26. COW	ہیلی کاپٹر 41. HELICOPTER	پہاڑ 56. MOUNTAIN	بیلچہ 70. SPADE	تانگہ 85. TONGA	کیلا 100. BANANA	انڈہ 115. EGG	شترمرغ 130. OSTRICH	واٹر کولر 145. WATER COOLER
بالٹی 12. BUCKET	پرچ پیالی 27. CUP & SAUCER	گھوڑا 42. HORSE	رہٹ 57. PERSIAN WHEEL	آری 71. SAW	چمٹا 86. TONGS	ٹوکری 101. BASKET	گملا 116. FLOWER POT	طوطا 131. PARROT	رنچ 146. WRENCH
بلب 13. BULB	فاختہ 28. DOVE	حقہ 43. HUKKAH	پشاوری چپل 58. PESHAWARI CHAPPAI	عینک 72. SPECTACLES	ٹریکٹر 87. TRACTOR	پلنگ 102. BED	بکری 117. GOAT	مور 132. PEACOCK	
انگور کا گچھا 14. BUNCH OF GRAPES	ہاتھی 29. ELEPHANT	قلم دوات 44. INKPOT WITH PEN	مٹکا 59. PITCHER	چرخہ 73. SPINNING WHEEL	درخت 88. TREE	تختہ سیاہ 103. BLACK BOARD	گراموفون 118. GRAMOPHONE	قلم 133. PEN	
بس 15. BUS	پنکھا 30. FAN	استری 45. IRON	رندہ 60. PLANNER	سوٹ کیس 74. SUITCASE	ٹرک 89. TRUCK	اینٹ 104. BRICK	ہینگر 119. HANGER	انار 134. POMEGRANATE	

parties, chose the symbol of a book *(Figure 6)* and promoted its perception as the Qur'an (known in Arabic as *Al Kitab* or The Book). These religious overtones acquired additional relevance with the party's unexpected victory in the 2002 elections, something that the analysts attributed to an expression of the Muslim electorate's disapproval of government support for the West concerning the Iraq war.

Another oft-quoted example laden with religious sentiment is that of the sword *(Figure 9)*, the symbol of the liberal Pakistan People's Party (PPP) until the 1988 elections. Not only does it traditionally imply power, protection and courage but it semantically and historically refers to the word 'Zulfiqar' which is the name of the legendary sword of the fourth Caliph of Islam. When the EC decided ahead of the 1988 elections that the sword would no longer be a choice, the PPP selected the *teer* or arrow[i] *(Figure 10)* to replace it. *Thappay pey thappa, teer pey thappa* (Stamp after stamp, stamp on the arrow) has since become a popular party slogan.

The selection of a symbol could be inextricably linked to its regional, agrarian, historical or religious connotations. An example of the regional context were the *Peshawari Chappals*—a pair of leather sandals, named after the capital city of the North-West Frontier Province—selected by the Pakhtoonkhwa Qaumi Party in elections 2002. Tools of the trade such as the spade, the *karandi* (trowel), and the tractor were chosen by the Punjab National Party, Labour Party Pakistan[ii] and National People's Party—parties representing the working class. In fact, the dual arrangement of the sickle and hammer[iii] and the *charkha* (wheel)[iv] recall earlier potent political associations. The latter, reminiscent of the Independence movement, forms a part of the Indian national standard, and in Pakistan represents the Hindus and Scheduled Castes' Party.

Animals are an enduring visual phenomenon in the subcontinent, as affirmed by the humped bull, the elephant and the unicorn of the Indus Valley seals dating back to 4000 BCE. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) selected the *sher* (tiger or lion) as its election symbol and fully exploited its well known characteristics of majesty, strength, justice and might as the king of the jungle. One poster featured party chief Nawaz Sharif and a lion alongside a famous Urdu quotation attributed to the legendary fighter Tipu Sultan: 'To live for one day as a lion is better than living for a hundred years as a jackal.'[6] In the Punjab, the stronghold of the

4–6.

Figures 3–12. Wall chalkings of election symbols

Symbols are usually painted on walls in party colours. Additionally, the name of the party in acronyms, the names of the party leaders, slogans as well as the party flag, are included.

Figure 4 shows the symbol of a huqqa *(waterpipe) next to which is written 'Election symbol waterpipe'. Figure 5 shows a rickshaw with the name Irfanullah Khan Marwat, a candidate for a provincial assembly seat. In Figure 6 next to the book (election symbol of the MMA) is written 'Only stamp the book' urging the viewer to 'Make the book a success'. Figure 7 depicts the fist accompanied by the slogan 'Long live Ghinwa Bhutto'. Figure 8 shows an 'axe' within the red flag for Jeay Sindh, on the way to Thatta, 2007. Figure 9 shows the flag of the PPP and its earlier symbol, the sword, painted outside the Bhutto mausoleum at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh (2008), while in Figure 10 the arrow is painted in the PPP colours. Sponsored by the Malir District, it carries the name of the candidate Salman Abdullah Murad for the Sindh Assembly seat. Figure 11 shows a stencil of the kite in party colours of the MQM from the 2002 elections. In 2008, the party decided against defacing public property by not advertising on wall chalkings. Figure 12 displays the bright red lantern of the ANP along with its red flag.*

Figure 13. Activists of the PML-N flashing V signs gathered around a car with a striped animal-print skin stretched over its hood—a visual reference to their election symbol, the sher *(lion or tiger).*

---

i. In Greek mythology it is the weapon of Apollo and Diana, signifying the light of Supreme power.[7] According to PPP leader Syed Taj Haider, the arrow as a symbol was selected by party worker Akhtar Mirza at the request of the PPP's late chairperson, Benazir Bhutto. 'Mirza [randomly] opened *Shah Jo Risalo* a book based on the spiritual poetry of Hazrat Shah Abdul Lateef Bhittai (a Sufi saint of Sindh). The first thing he read was [the line] *Sabr Jein Jo Seer...Teer Na Gussay Tin Jo*. In a rough translation, this means 'the one whose city is patience...the arrow shall never hit *(Narrated to Shah Jilani, reporter, The Daily Times)*.

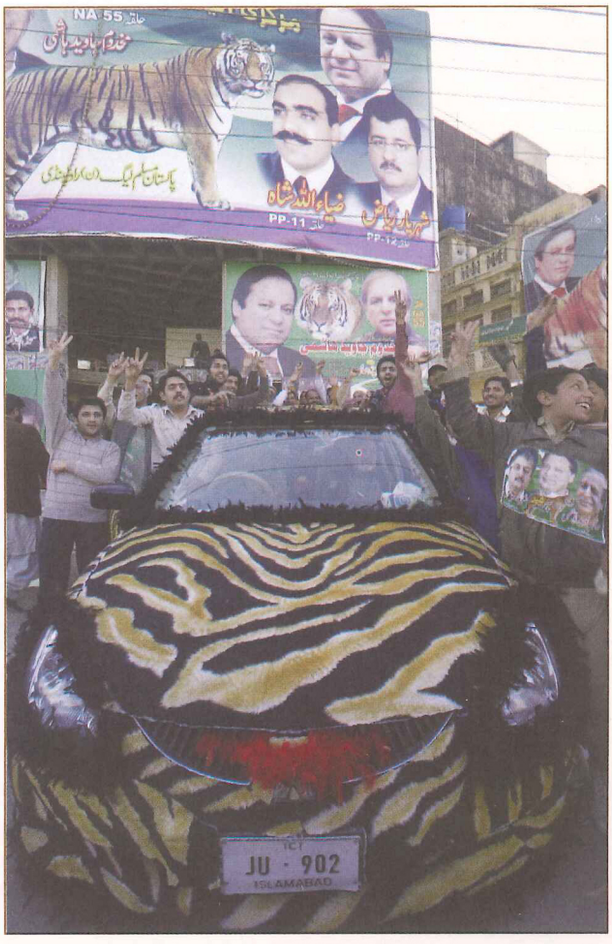
ii. In the general elections 2002.

iii. Symbolic of Communism. The hammer in Pakistani politics is the symbol of the Tameer-e Pakistan Party (*tameer:* construct).

iv. The navy-blue wheel with 24 spokes, known as the Ashoka Chakra 'the wheel of Righteousness', is used on the Indian flag and was taken from the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath. Thus, the *charkha* (spinning wheel), a symbol of economic regeneration of India under Mahatma Gandhi, evolved into the *chakra*, the wheel.

جئے بھٹو
PS-12
سلیمان
عبداللہ
مراد
ضلع میر
انتخابی نشان
لالٹین

7–12.


NA 55
ضیاء اللہ شاہ
PP-11
JU · 902
ISLAMABAD

13.

PML-N, the lion is also a reference to the popular folklore of *Jagga*, a colonial-day Robin Hood from Sialkot. Novelty was added to some of the PML-N's campaign rallies by the presence of a live lion in a cage while other more practical and animal-friendly versions were lion sculptures flanking the podium, stuffed toy lions held aloft by party members or affixed to the roof of a car. One PML-N activist exhibited creative genius by stretching a striped animal-print skin over the hood of his car *(Figure 13)*.

The election symbols are thus open to interpretation by political parties, proving Gombrich's notion of 'the beholder's share'. Meaning, thus, lies in the eyes of the beholder much like an 'image in the clouds' or the proverbial ink blot; you see what you want to see. For example, the kite *(Figure 11)* was the symbol of choice for the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), which started out as a party for Urdu-speaking Muslims (or Muhajirs) who migrated to Pakistan at Partition in 1947. The kite, generally associated with the attainment of height, could also refer to the notion of the *kati patang* or literally 'the kite cut loose' symbolising the 'displacement' of the Muhajirs, as explained by a supporter.[i]

Not all symbols, however, find resonance with political parties and voters; in fact, they may even have negative connotations. For example, the *kursi* (chair) implying a lust for power in popular Urdu idiom, was considered, by and large politically incorrect, while the *lota*, a vessel used for ablution and disparagingly applied to political turncoats was soundly rejected in the 2008 elections.

Thus, the election symbol primarily serves as an identification device. Its relentless exposure ensures that it becomes ingrained in the voter's consciousness and is instantly recognised when it is time to stamp the ballot paper.

THE PROPHETS OF POLITICS

Politics in Pakistan remains personality- (and not issue-) driven, the leader or the chairperson being the party's most visible face. 'The cult of personality cannot be separated from the image or objectives of a party,'[8] and the visual campaigns for the elections 2008 were no different; smiling candidates greeted the public from billboards, posters and banners *(Figures 20–40)*. These faces carpeted the city and it is arguable that not a single neighbourhood or major road was without them. What was conspicuously absent from these graphic statements, however, was the image of the *awam* or masses, the people responsible for bringing them to power.

Thus, the political poster for the 2008 elections aimed at doing little more than 'stimulat[ing] (and simplify[ing]) moral sentiments' as Susan Sontag puts it, something that was 'classically achieved through a visual metaphor, usually a thing or an idea, being attached to the emblematic image of a person'. This principle also plays out in commercial advertising as exemplified by the pervasive use of the image of a pretty girl or as Marshall McLuhan puts it, the 'mechanical bride'. 'The equivalent in

i. Revealed to Saquib Hanif (former editor of *Herald* magazine), by an MQM activist. Also to capitalize on their election symbol, a *patang mela* 'kite-festival' was held at Nishtar Park as part of MQM's pre-election campaign (recalling *Basant*, a kite-flying festival to welcome spring in the Punjab).

Figures 14–19. Wall chalkings on Shahrah-e Faisal to welcome Benazir Bhutto's arrival in Karachi, October 2007.

Figures 14–17. This wall on the way to the airport reads 'Challo challo' (Let's go, let's go), a popular call to invite the public, especially to a political gathering. It continues, 'Airport challo, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto ka tareekhi Istaqbal' which means 'Let's go to the airport to give Benazir Bhutto a historic welcome' on 18 October 2007.

Figure 18 declares 'Benazir Ayegi, Rozgar Layegi' (Benazir will come, bringing gainful employment).

Figure 19. 'Fakhre Asia, Dukhtare Mashriq' (The Pride of Asia, Daughter of the East). The popularity of certain slogans can be gauged by their adoption by several parties for example, the poster for Zubeida Jalal, former Education Minister celebrated her as 'Daughter of Makran, The Pride of Balochistan' in Elections 2002 in which she participated as an independent candidate (not shown here).

Figure 20. Thousands of photographs of the late PPP chairperson have been used in every conceivable graphics with her white dupatta covering her head. This poster shows Benazir prominently placed within a crescent with her face towards the Ka'aba and hands raised in prayer. This Reuters photograph showed her stopping while descending from the plane upon her arrival in Karachi on 18 October 2007 after years of exile. She was captured from below as she lifted her hands in a prayer of thanks for her return to Pakistan. This much-reproduced semi-religious image came to carry intense meaning after her death.

Figure 21. A banner of Benazir Bhutto being unfurled for a gathering in Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi where she was assassinated. It reads 'Shaheed-i Jamhooriyat' (Martyr for Democracy) and 'Ya Allah, Ya Rasool Benazir Beqasoor, Benazir Beqasoor, Benazir Beqasoor' the slogan invoking God and the Prophet (PBUH) and repeating the statement 'Benazir Innocent'.

Figure 22. Poster by artist Khuda Bux Abro.

As part of his political activism, Abro has designed several posters which he uploads for viewing on the internet. This poster was in reaction to the 27 March 2008 meeting of National Assembly when slogans of 'Zinda hai Bhutto Zinda hai' (Alive, Bhutto is Alive) were raised defiantly in the oath-taking ceremony. In this poster the slogan is repeated several times to visually capture the echoes.

14–20.

پورٹ چلو محترمہ بینظیر
سلیم سیمن ، اکبر ولی ، شریف لاشاری

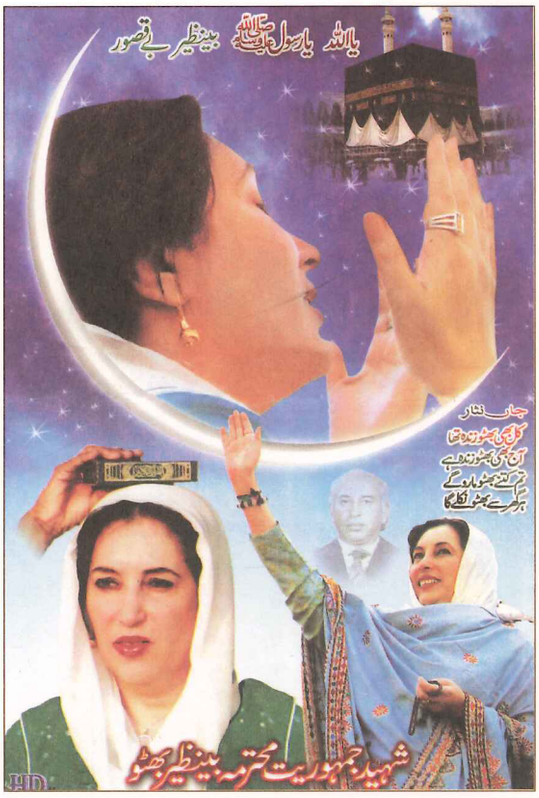
چلو چلو
نعمان عبداللہ مراد

18 اکتوبر بروز 2007
غلام مرتضیٰ بلوچ

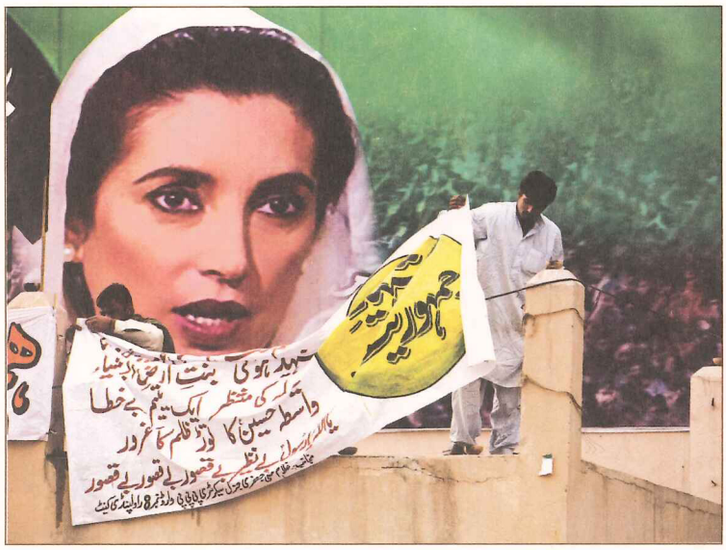
بھٹو صاحبہ تاریخی استقبال
نعمان عبداللہ مراد ، عبدالواحد بلوچ
ذوالفقار عرف ذلفی

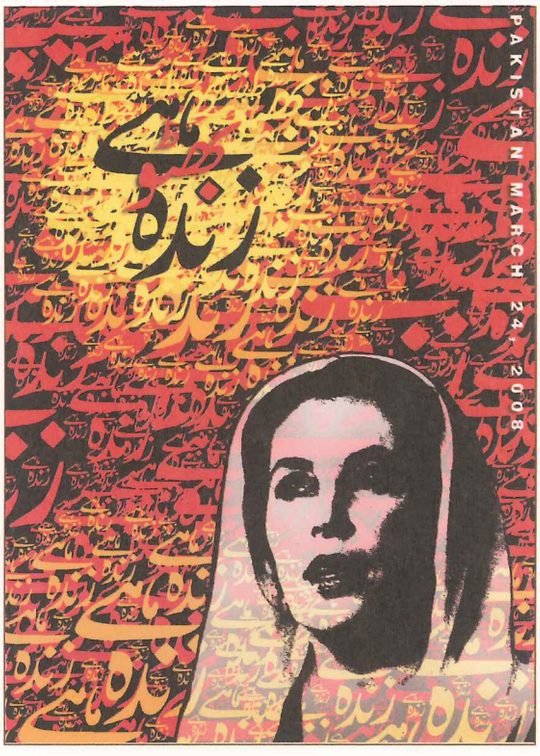
بے نظیر آئیگی
روزگار لائیگی

فخر ایشیا دختر مشرق
شریف لاشاری ، عبدالواحد بلوچ
میر شبیر


یا اللہ یا رسول صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم بینظیر بے قصور
شہید جمہوریت محترمہ بینظیر بھٹو

21–22.




PAKISTAN MARCH 24, 2008

political advertising is the heroic figure who may be a celebrated leader of the struggle, living or martyred, or an anonymous representative citizen, such as a soldier, a worker, a mother, a war victim.'[9]

Heroic imagery is standard fare in propaganda worldwide. During the cultural revolution of China, an estimated 2.2 billion portraits of Chairman Mao were printed. They were found in every home where they were conferred a highly revered status; 'Nothing could be placed above it, and its frame could not have a single blemish.'[10] Another revolutionary icon, Che Guevara, has morphed into a stylish global symbol of resistance, protest and desire for change. Albert Korda's 'most reproduced image in the history of photography' continues to surface all over the world—as is seen on walls in Palestine, the packaging of 'Cherry Guevara' ice cream in Australia,[11] and placards in protest rallies in Pakistan *(Figure 41)*.

The notion of the martyr has been noticeably projected by the PPP which frequently features images of party founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, hung in 1979 by a military dictator. In a stunning historical twist, the PPP's most well known face of Benazir Bhutto was transformed from a living icon to a martyred legend right in the middle of a campaign rally in December 2007.

The heroic status of political leaders is consolidated in images that capture trademark body language. A popular hand gesture is the V-sign denoting victory[i] the clenched fist and other dramatic polemical devices that were used by the Left and were adapted later for Second World War propaganda.[12] A crossroads in an MQM-dominated area in Karachi is popularly known as *Mukka Chowk*[ii] because of a large sculpture of a clenched fist, which was also the signature gesture of the first prime minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan.

Politicians in Pakistan also adopt attire which over time becomes their trademark. Headdress such as the turban, white veil,[iii] even a fez cap[iv] often assumes significance by becoming a personalized 'halo'.

And then there are campaigns such as that of the MQM's 2008 promotional video *Saathi* (companion) in which party chief Altaf Hussain is depicted in an almost prophetic light but does not make an actual appearance. During the six-minute clip, he is alluded to as a source of comfort in times of trouble and grief by an approaching pair of feet in his signature shoes and hands with his well known rings. This technique was employed in motion pictures on the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who, according to Islamic tradition, can never be shown as a human image. Instead the camera itself stood in as the persona, a method copied by the MQM in its video.

For the election campaigns, a persistent element present in most posters is that of religious iconography. This was more of a preoccupation of secular

23.

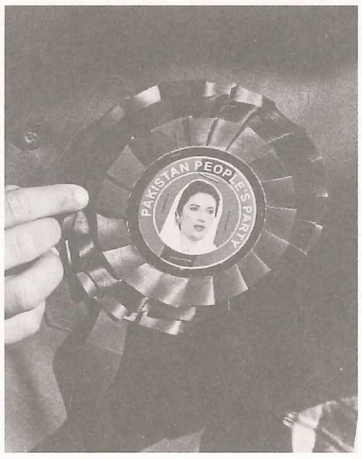


Figure 23. A ribbon rosette with a photograph of Benazir Bhutto pinned on a coat.

Figure 24. A banner with a painting of Benazir Bhutto in the foreground and that of her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto partially seen in the shadows (outside Bilawal House, Karachi 2008).

Figure 25. On the eve of the elections, children install a PML-N flag from the top of an abandoned tower in Rawalpindi. Featured are images of Nawaz Sharif and the party symbol, the tiger.

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i. In a radio broadcast during the Second World War, Belgian lawyer Victor De Lavelaye proposed using the V hand sign for 'victory' in a propaganda campaign against the Nazis. Winston Churchill adopted the idea and it became his personal emblem. The sign mutated into a symbol of peace, when it was used by those protesting US military involvement during the Vietnam War.[13]

ii. *Mukka*: clenched fist, *chowk*: intersection.

iii. Benazir Bhutto.

iv. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan.

24.

25.

parties such as the MQM and PPP, which needed to woo the religious vote bank than the actual religio-political parties that had already carved out such an identity for themselves. A PPP poster *(Figure 20)* shows three cropped photographs of Benazir Bhutto; the most prominent is an image of her head nestled within the crescent of a moon, facing the Ka'aba, her hands raised in prayer. Below, on the left, she is seen with a copy of the Qur'an held over her head in a visual metaphor of protection, and on the right, she is waving one hand while the other holds a *tasbeeh* or rosary.

These graphic demonstrations of piety[i] were a 'bequeath' of General Ziaul Haq's Islamisation era. According to Iftikhar Dadi, 'At this juncture, Pakistani leaders were negotiating with the legacy of fundamentalism, even as everyone understood that neither Benazir, nor Nawaz Sharif, nor Altaf Hussain were "fundamentalists" or even personally pious.'[14]

OF THE PEOPLE

The production and dissemination of design can garner public opinion and facilitate the democratic process. An example is the trajectory taken by Solidarity, a pluralistic mass movement of radical democratic change in Poland from the 1980s. 'Its activities, characterized by a commitment to non-violence and subversive resistance to the harshly repressive Communist regime, eventually led in 1989 to the first democratic elections in a Communist country since 1946.' A popular poster referenced the American film of 1952, *High Noon*, in which Gary Cooper is the cowboy sheriff who stands ready to confront 'the Communist outlaws', armed not with a gun but a ballot for Solidarity.[15] The same theme was evoked in a pre-election poster-based campaign in 2002 in Zimbabwe; designer and social activist Chaz Maviyane Davies created the slogan 'Take courage: Vote', highlighting the need for freedom of expression and a violence-free society that would combat hunger and poverty by reviving democracy. A tagline on a poster declared 'You don't need a bullet, when you've got the ballot. Violence solves nothing. Use your vote'.[16]

In Pakistan, in the 1970s, a rallying cry of the PPP, *Maang raha hai har Insaan: Roti, Kapra aur Makan* (The clamour of every person: Bread, Clothing and Shelter), echoed the basic needs of millions. In 2008, the manifestos of two major political parties centred on the 5 Es (Employment, Energy, Education, Environment and Equality) and the 5 Ds (Democracy, Development, Defence, Devolution and Diversity). The ruling party, the PML-Q, based much of its campaign on education, highlighting it in television advertisements prior to the elections. Using the catchy slogan *Parha likha Punjab* (A Literate Punjab) it featured students in rural classrooms along with images of party chairperson Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, also the Punjab Chief Minister at that time.

i. Also, it is important to note that parties such as the MMA and Jamaat-e Islami (which boycotted the 2008 elections) etc. would not want to offend voter sentiment by using photographs of leaders, which is perceived as forbidden in Islam. They instead rely on architecture or objects such as Prophet Muhammad's green-domed mosque in Madinah or the curved sword as it appears in the Saudi Arabian flag.

26.

27.

Figures 26–32. Billboards of PML-N and PML-Q, Lahore.

Large billboards cover the façades of buildings. The predominant colour for both contesting parties is green and white while the distinguishing features are the election symbol and images of party leaders.

Figure 26 shows two billboards placed over the façade of a mosque, the one on the right features King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, with Nawaz Sharif on his right. This appears to serve as a reminder of the close ties of the latter with the leader of the country which provided him political asylum in 1999.

Figure 27 shows the exterior of the central office of the PML-N covered with billboards, wall chalkings and flags. On the left is a photograph of the symbol of the PML-N tiger. Also, a billboard depicts the Sharif brothers and the candidates for the provincial and National assemblies.

Figure 29 displays a billboard of the PML-Q with a photograph of Quaid-i-Azam at Chauburji, Lahore. The election symbol, the bicycle, is highlighted within a white circle. Figure 30 shows the candidate Mian Muhammad Aslam Iqbal, with his arms raised in a glowing green silhouette in front of a photograph showing supporters attending a political rally. Another photograph on the same billboard shows the candidate addressing a gathering. Names and photographs of the sponsors are lined up at the bottom.

Figure 31 shows candidate Moonis Elahi, waving from banners stretched on a wall. Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain focus on the bicycle with the slogan 'The identity of the people is the cycle, the symbol of victory is the cycle'.

28.

انتخابی
نشان
شیر
PP
151
NA
126
اعجاز احمد خان

29.

NA121

30.

محبت ہی جائیں گے
سائیکل
میاں محمد اسلم اقبال
آصف خان
راج محمد خان
چودھری بشیر احمد
زاہد خان
سپورٹرز
شیخ عبدالرزاق، حاجی محمد سلیم، حاجی بشیر، محمود بٹ
جاوید صاحب، ملک محمد عمران، محمد نعیم
ارشاد چدھری
سجاد حیدر
رحمت خان
عبدالرحمن خان

31.

مولانا الٰہی
PP 152
مولانا الٰہی
PP 152
مولانا الٰہی
PP 152

32.

میاں فیاض خالد
جیت کا نشان ہے سائیکل

Even though they were included in the manifestoes, social issues were not translated into graphic statements. The design of promotional ephemera ubiquitously focused on photographs of politicians, cut and pasted on a flat, coloured background along with the party symbol and colours. A notable departure from this were the visuals of the MQM, with its primary constituencies in Karachi and Hyderabad. Billboards with the symbols of the map of Pakistan, love, industry, peace, as well as their party symbol of the kite and a Warholesque silk-screened image of the party leader mushroomed across the landscape *(Figures 35&36)*. The shift in style suggested an audience-oriented design strategy addressing the middle class city-dwellers, bred on a daily diet of slick, international graphics.

Campaigns that fail to keep the target audience in mind can, however, misfire. In 2004, *India Shining*, a 100-million-dollar media campaign created by Grey's Advertising emphasized the economic upswing brought about by the then ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. Designed to appeal to an urban, affluent audience, the campaign failed to charm the underprivileged, rural electorate (forming the majority) which had not substantially benefited from the economic boom. Meanwhile, the Congress Party, for a paltry $6.5 million, assisted by a local subsidiary of Leo Burnett, catapulted to victory by focusing on 'What didn't the common man get?'[17] This is an echo of Saatchi and Saatchi's successful campaign for Margaret Thatcher in 1976 'Labour Isn't Working', which had print ads of a long, winding line outside an unemployment office;[18] this was the first time an advertising campaign was credited with affecting the outcome of an election.

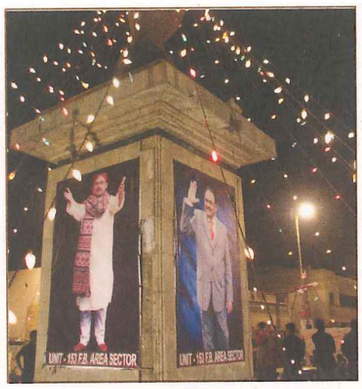
CONCLUSION

Election symbols are customized to the cultural comfort zone of the electorate. Mundane objects, such as the modes of transport, the bicycle, rickshaw, or helicopter,[i] become a vehicle for memory and a recognizable political identity. The party symbols do not include anthropomorphic form and religious symbolism. These elements are incorporated in posters, billboards and other graphic statements which venerate the leadership. An emphasis on religiosity as demonstrated in the visuals has emerged in the last three decades and can be explained in terms of being the only binding force, or a common thread running through an otherwise diverse spectrum of ethnicities, sects, languages, in fact cultures.

Subscribing to a repetitive visual agenda, the posters of different parties play musical chairs with three design elements—the symbol, party colours and the leaders. And while this works, the potential for conceptual design as an instrument of political and social change remains essentially unexplored. This may in part also be indicative of the nascent and truncated nature of democracy in the country. A focus on social issues and the inclusion of the people may have considerable influence in increasing voter participation, and building a vote bank. As stated by Susan Sontag, 'What determines whether good political posters are made in a country, more than the talent of the artists, and the health of the other visual arts, is the cultural policy of the government, or party or movement—whether it recognizes quality, whether it encourages it, even demands it.'[19]

i. Tehrik-e-Istaqlal (Rehmat Khan Wardag).

33.



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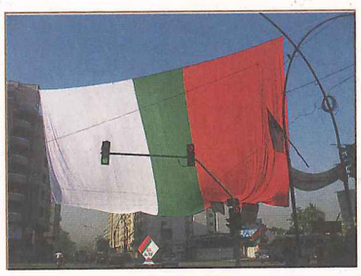


Figure 33. Altaf Hussain posters pasted at Mukka Chowk, Karachi show him wearing the 'ajrak' and Sindhi cap over a white kurta pyjama and also in a western suit in an attempt to visually reconcile the provincial and the international.

Figure 34. A large flag of the MQM hanging over a street.

Figures 35–38. Billboards for the MQM with the bands of red, green and white. The slogan in Figure 35 reads 'Empowerment for all', while in Figure 36 it states 'We will give Pakistan Peace, Progress and Happiness'.

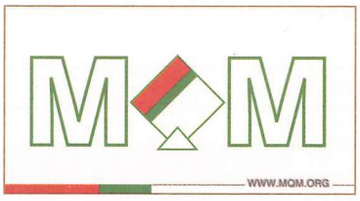
Figures 37&38 show typographic play with the letter Q being replaced by the election symbol of the kite and the universal symbol of peace. The website address is also stated.

Figures 39&40. The red banners of the ANP in Peshawar. This figure shows the candidates in the traditional Pathan 'pakole' cap and the party's trademark flat red cap.

Figure 41. Placards of Che Guevara seen at a rally on Zaibunnissa street, Karachi.

35.

37.



36.

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39.

41.

40.

For the people, a party's symbol and its political campaigns communicate a promise. Immediately after the elections, as a reminder of this responsibility, a local television channel ran a clip of black and white images of the winning candidates and their party workers with a popular old song playing in the background: *Jo wada kiya wo nibhana pare ga*. The promise made will need to be fulfilled.

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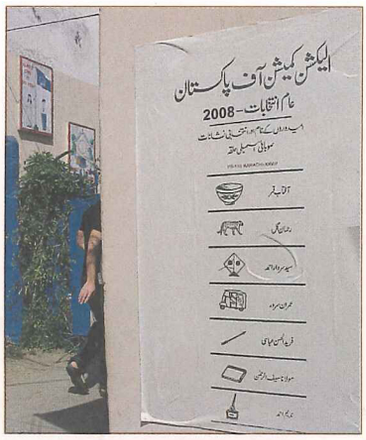
19. SONTAG 'Posters: Advertisement, Art, Political Artifact, Commodity', op. cit.

List of Political Parties and Symbols allocated to them in General Elections (2002, 1997, 1993, 1990, 1988) http//www.ecp.gov.pk/content/PWS.htm
http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/Symbol-allotted.pdf\\

The author acknowledges the help of Qamar-uz Zaman, Provincial Election Commissioner, (Karachi) and Saquib Hanif.

42.



43.

Figures 42&43. Posters printed by the Election Commission of Pakistan outside a polling station.

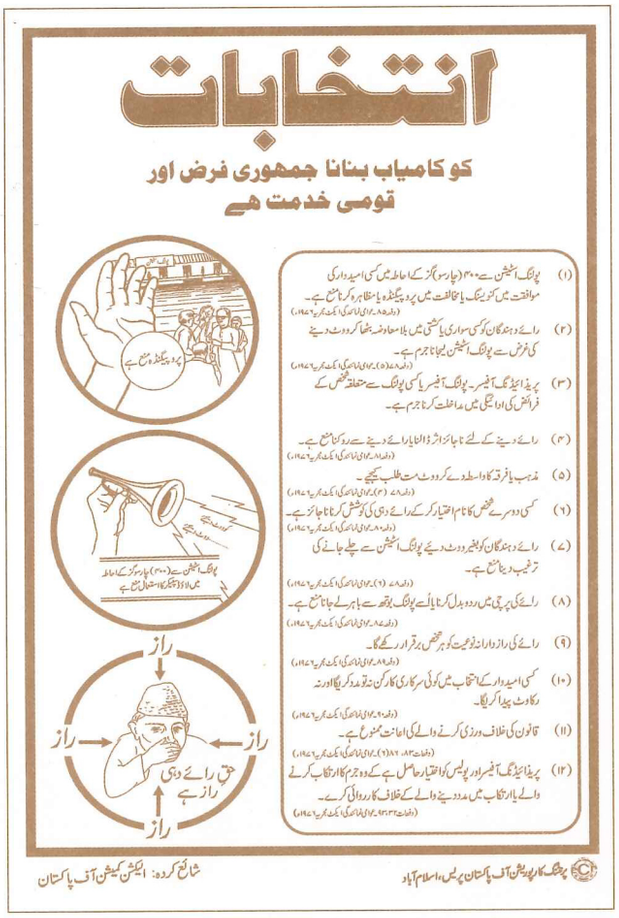
Figure 44. Poster listing the codes of conduct for the voters. The headline reads 'Making the elections a success is a democratic responsibility'.

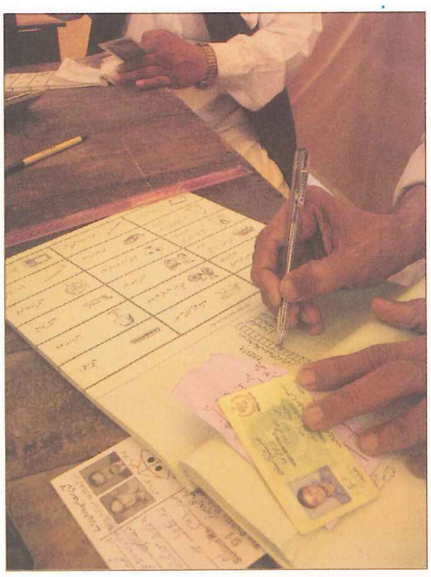
Figure 46. Another poster depicting 'The correct procedure to stamp the ballot paper'.

Figures 45&47. The ballot paper being issued by a polling officer after confirmation of the voter's identity through the national identity card and fingerprinting before the vote is cast.

Figure 48. The translucent ballot box containing the cast ballot papers. These boxes were colour-coded, green covers for the National and white for the Provincial assemblies.

44.


انتخابات
کو کامیاب بنانا جمہوری فرض اور
قومی خدمت ہے
(۱) پولنگ اسٹیشن سے ۴۰۰ (چار سو) گز کے احاطہ میں کسی امیدوار کی موافقت میں کنویسنگ یا مخالفت میں پروپیگنڈہ یا مظاہرہ کرنا منع ہے۔
(دفعہ ۸۸، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۲) رائے دہندگان کو کسی سواری یا کشتی میں بلا معاوضہ منتقل کر ووٹ دینے کی غرض سے پولنگ اسٹیشن لیجانا جرم ہے۔
(دفعہ ۸۴(۵)، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۳) پریذائیڈنگ آفیسر۔ پولنگ آفیسر یا کسی پولنگ سے متعلقہ شخص کے فرائض کی ادائیگی میں مداخلت کرنا جرم ہے۔
(۴) رائے دینے کے لئے ناجائز اثر ڈالنا یا رائے دینے سے روکنا منع ہے۔
(دفعہ ۸۱، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۵) مذہب یا فرقہ کا واسطہ دے کر ووٹ مت طلب کیجئے۔
(دفعہ ۷۸ (۳)، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۶) کسی دوسرے شخص کا نام اختیار کر کے رائے دہی کی کوشش کرنا جائز ہے۔
(دفعہ ۸۰، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۷) رائے دہندگان کو بغیر ووٹ دیئے پولنگ اسٹیشن سے چلے جانے کی ترغیب دینا منع ہے۔
(دفعہ ۷۷ (۲)، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۸) رائے کی پرچی میں ردوبدل کرنا یا اسے پولنگ بوتھ سے باہر لے جانا منع ہے۔
(دفعہ ۸۲، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۹) رائے کی رازدارانہ نوعیت کو ہر شخص برقرار رکھے گا۔
(دفعہ ۸۸، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۱۰) کسی امیدوار کے انتخاب میں کوئی سرکاری کارکن نہ تو مدد کریگا اور نہ رکاوٹ پیدا کریگا۔
(دفعہ ۹۰، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۱۱) قانون کی خلاف ورزی کرنے والے کی اعانت ممنوع ہے۔
(دفعات ۸۳، ۸۶ (۲)، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
(۱۲) پریذائیڈنگ آفیسر اور پولیس کو اختیار حاصل ہے کہ وہ جرم کا ارتکاب کرنے والے یا ارتکاب میں مدد دینے والے کے خلاف کارروائی کرے۔
(دفعات ۱۲۶، ۱۳۲، عوامی نمائندگی، ایکٹ نمبر ۱۹۷۶ء)
پرہیزگار ہو شیار
پروپیگنڈہ منع ہے
پولنگ اسٹیشن سے (۴۰۰) چار سو گز کے احاطہ میں لاؤڈ اسپیکر کا استعمال منع ہے
راز
راز
راز
راز
حق رائے دہی راز ہے
پرنٹنگ کارپوریشن آف پاکستان پریس، اسلام آباد
شائع کردہ: الیکشن کمیشن آف پاکستان



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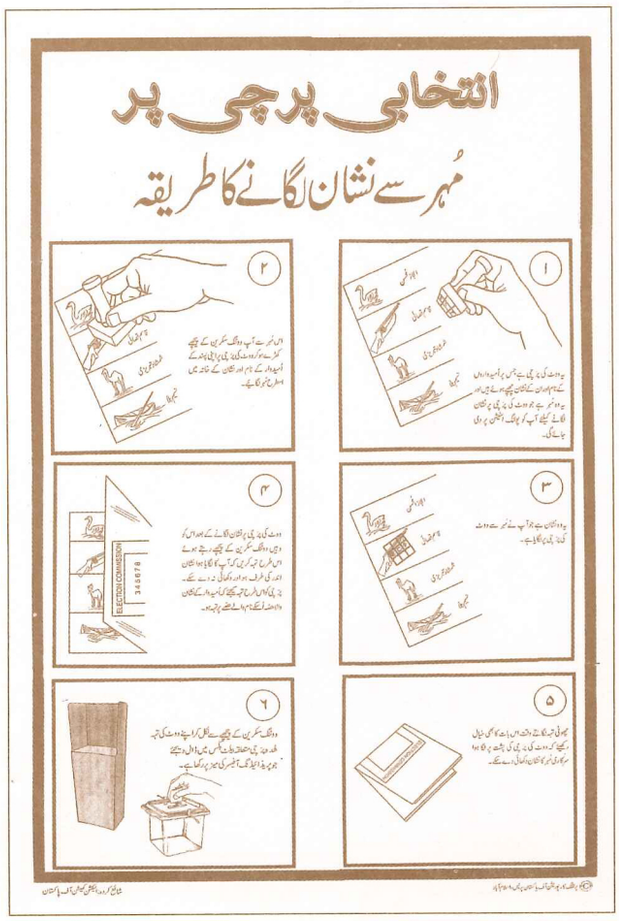
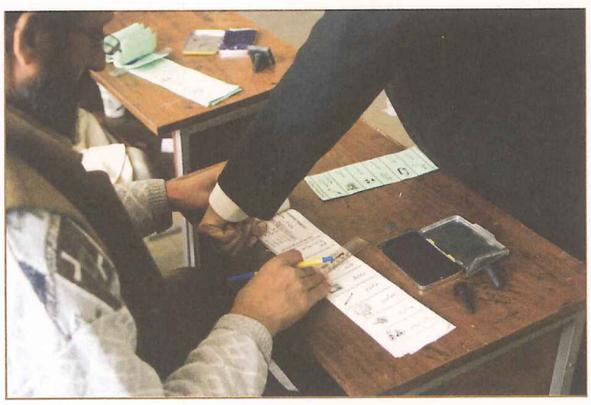

انتخابی پرچی پر
مُہر سے نشان لگانے کا طریقہ
۱
یہ ووٹ کی پرچی ہے جس پر امیدواروں کے نام اور ان کے نشان چھپے ہوئے ہیں اور یہ وہ نمبر ہے جو ووٹ کی پرچی پر نشان لگانے کیلئے آپ کو پولنگ اسٹیشن پر دیا جائے گا۔
۲
اس نمبر سے آپ ووٹنگ سکرین کے پیچھے کھڑے ہو کر ووٹ کی پرچی پر اپنی پسند کے امیدوار کے نام اور نشان کے نمائندہ کی مہر لگائیں گے۔
۳
یہ وہ نشان ہے جو آپ نے نمبر سے ووٹ کی پرچی لگایا ہے۔
۴
ووٹ کی پرچی پر نشان لگانے کے بعد اس کو دہری ووٹنگ سکرین کے پیچھے رہتے ہوئے اس طرح تہ کریں کہ آپ کا لگایا ہوا نشان اندر کی طرف ہو اور دکھائی نہ دے سکے۔ پرچی کو اس طرح تہ کیجئے کہ آپ کا نمبر اور نشان دکھائی نہ دے۔ اسے اپنے ساتھ لے جائیے۔
ELECTION COMMISSION
۵
پھر اپنی تہہ کئے ہوئے اس پرچے کا کسی خیال رکھیئے کہ ووٹ کی پرچی کی پشت پر ۵ یا ۶ سرکاری نمبر کا نشان لگا دیا جائے گا۔
۶
ووٹنگ سکرین کے پیچھے سے نکل کر اپنے ووٹ کی تہہ شدہ پرچی حفاظت بلٹ بکس میں ڈال دیجئے جو پریذائیڈنگ آفیسر کی نظر پر رکھا ہے۔
شائع کردہ: الیکشن کمیشن آف پاکستان
پرنٹنگ کارپوریشن آف پاکستان پریس، اسلام آباد



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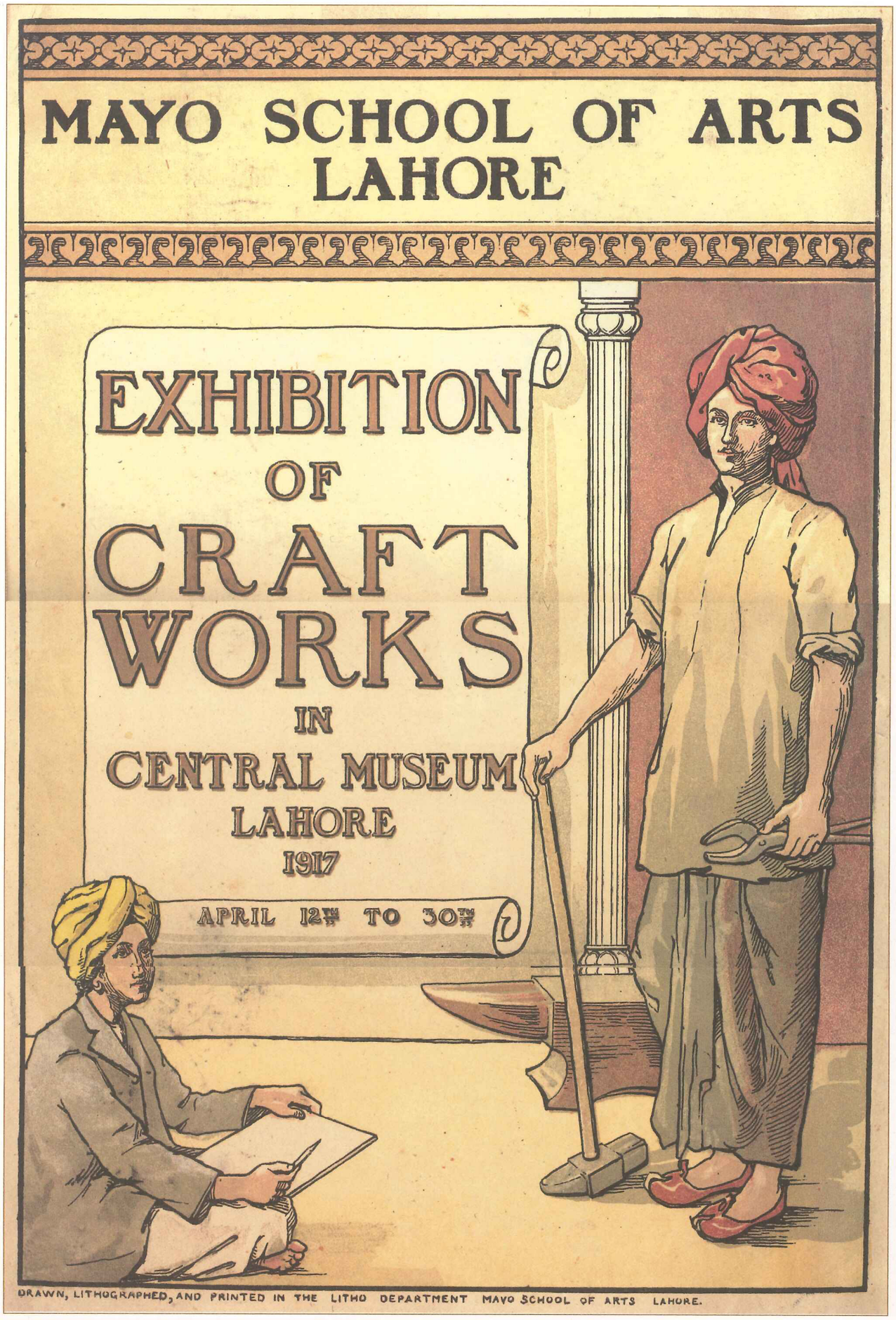
PRE-PARTITION PERSPECTIVE

1.



NADEEM OMAR TARAR

CHROMOLITHOGRAPHY AND THE MAYO SCHOOL OF ART, LAHORE (1917–1920 CE)

NADEEM OMAR TARAR

THE MAYO SCHOOL OF ART

The Mayo School of Art was started as a 'craft' school in 1875 by the British colonial state to provide elementary skills to the village 'artisans' and to train them as 'traditional' craftsmen.[1]

Following Independence, the National College of Arts (NCA) was built on the 'ruins' of the old school in 1958 to give instruction in the 'Fine Arts'.[2] This heralded the beginning of modern art in Pakistan and is understood to be symptomatic of a cultural and political transition from a colonized to an independent national identity.[3] This marked the artistic emancipation from 'craft' to 'fine art', 'tradi-tional' to 'modern', and skill-based training to creative design.[4]

The six coloured chromo- and photolithographs included in this essay are from early twentieth century Mayo School of Art (MSA), Lahore (now the National College of Arts). They are examples of some of the earliest chromolithographs from an art school in north-western India,[5] and were originally designed, lithographed and printed in the photolithography department of MSA as publicity and propaganda posters, book covers and illustrations. They were reproduced for the annual calendar of the National College of Arts Archives (NCAA) in 2004.

Hundreds of coloured posters were printed at the Mayo School of Art printing press from 1916 to 1926; however, no systematic record of this collection was ever kept. Since they were mass-produced for the market, their status as 'art' was diminished and they did not capture the attention of art connoisseurs and the literate public.[6]

In fact, popular posters, photographs and illustrations (or calendar art in common parlance)—circulating outside the bourgeoisie public sphere of art galleries and museums—have been dismissed as 'low art'.[7] Recently, however, many Indian art commentators have argued that as a popular visual medium, calendar art, *extends to smaller prints, or 'framing pictures' and posters, and is also in evidence in advertisements, packaging, comics, book illustrations, theatre, film and television.*[8]

The inclusion of these chromolithographs in a book on visual culture in Pakistan, is an endorsement of an unrecognised genre of art, which lies at the borders of graphic art and printmaking in South Asia.

LITHOGRAPHY AT MAYO SCHOOL OF ART

In late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab, the colonial discourse on art education and policy was anchored in a series of *cultural and aesthetic differences... between fine art and decorative art, folk art and classical art that emerged in Europe since the Renaissance.*[9] Lithography occupied an ambiguous position within the hierarchy of arts and crafts, which was based on the principles of utility and beauty.[10] This distinction emerged at the

Figure 1. (Left) Poster

EXHIBITION OF ARTS AND CRAFTS IN CENTRAL MUSEUM, LAHORE

Attributed to Lionel Heath, 1917.

The inscription at the bottom reads 'Drawn, lithographed, and printed in the Litho Department Mayo School of Arts Lahore'.

Size: 32.25x45.7 cm

level of society (designating artists and craftsmen as separate and graded occupations) and was also reflected in public institutions of art education (assigned separately for artists and craftsmen). Contrary to the career of art and craft in European history, in late nineteenth century India, the dividing line between art and craft, fine art and folk art was more ideological than historical, and was rooted in the colonial ideologies of occupational castes rather than in the principles of modern aesthetics.

This discourse neatly divided the aesthetic sphere into 'art for its own sake'—the practice and production of painting and sculpture—and 'art for utility'—ceramics, weaving, wood and metal work—thus bifurcating the Indian aesthetics into the restrictive categories of art and craft.

As a subject, lithography commenced at the MSA in the early decades of the twentieth century, as a 'craft'. The need for a printing press was keenly felt as basic print jobs like *ordinary address cards, bill headings and such things* were printed from Calcutta.[11] In 1915, the school imported state-of-the-art equipment and created a new department of 'photo-lithography'. Lionel Heath, the principal of MSA and Indian fine art critic, defined the objectives of the department as *meeting a future demand for improved advertising facilities in black and white colour, in India.*[12] His foresight proved correct as an economic boom was created in India during the inter-War period, which was marked by *the entry of multinational corporations into the domestic market for middle-class consumer goods and technology-intensive products.*[13]

The three-year course in lithography for ten students per year was *open to students who had passed the elementary department of the Mayo School of Arts in Painting* or had equivalent knowledge. The department showed considerable progress in training students for a variety of jobs in the emerging graphic art industry in north-western India. By 1922, around fifty-three students had been admitted over a span of seven years, *of these twenty-seven passed the final examination, the remainder left before completion of their course.*[i]

The earliest lithographic illustrations at the school included maps and plans of the city, a series of illustrations for the Urdu language books for industrial schools and a catalogue of coins for the Lahore Museum; these were printed by the Civil and Military Gazette Press, established by the colonial state of Lahore in the late nineteenth century.

Subsequently, the school began to print the works of students and teachers in collaboration with private as well as government sectors and designed, lithographed, printed and distributed illustrated craft manuals and pattern books for industrial schools. A commercial outlet, an Arts and Crafts Depot, was opened for the sale of products and edition prints of paintings made by artists as well as designs by craftsmen for use as patterns in the cottage industries.[19]

In nineteenth century Europe, the printing industry 'as a form of mass communication... was as influential as is satellite TV today'[15] and was used for producing posters and books.[16,17]
As a technique of mass reproduction as well as an artistic process, lithography took root in India largely due to its extensive use by the colonial bureaucracy for record keeping and the reproduction of ethnographic landscapes.[18]

i. A high dropout rate from the schools also signified a burgeoning demand for printmakers in the print industry as 'artist designer', 'photo-artist', 'craftsman designer', 'sketch artist', to cite a few then prevailing appellations. Many of them took photography as a profession, worked as lithographers or 'process workers' in the government business in Lahore. Some became 'decorative painters' feeding off to the cinema boards industry[14] and others found employment as drawing masters in schools. Hence, they belonged to the world of trade, commerce and manual work which has been relegated to the realm of craft by the modern Indian artists.

Figure 2. (Right) Poster, World War I

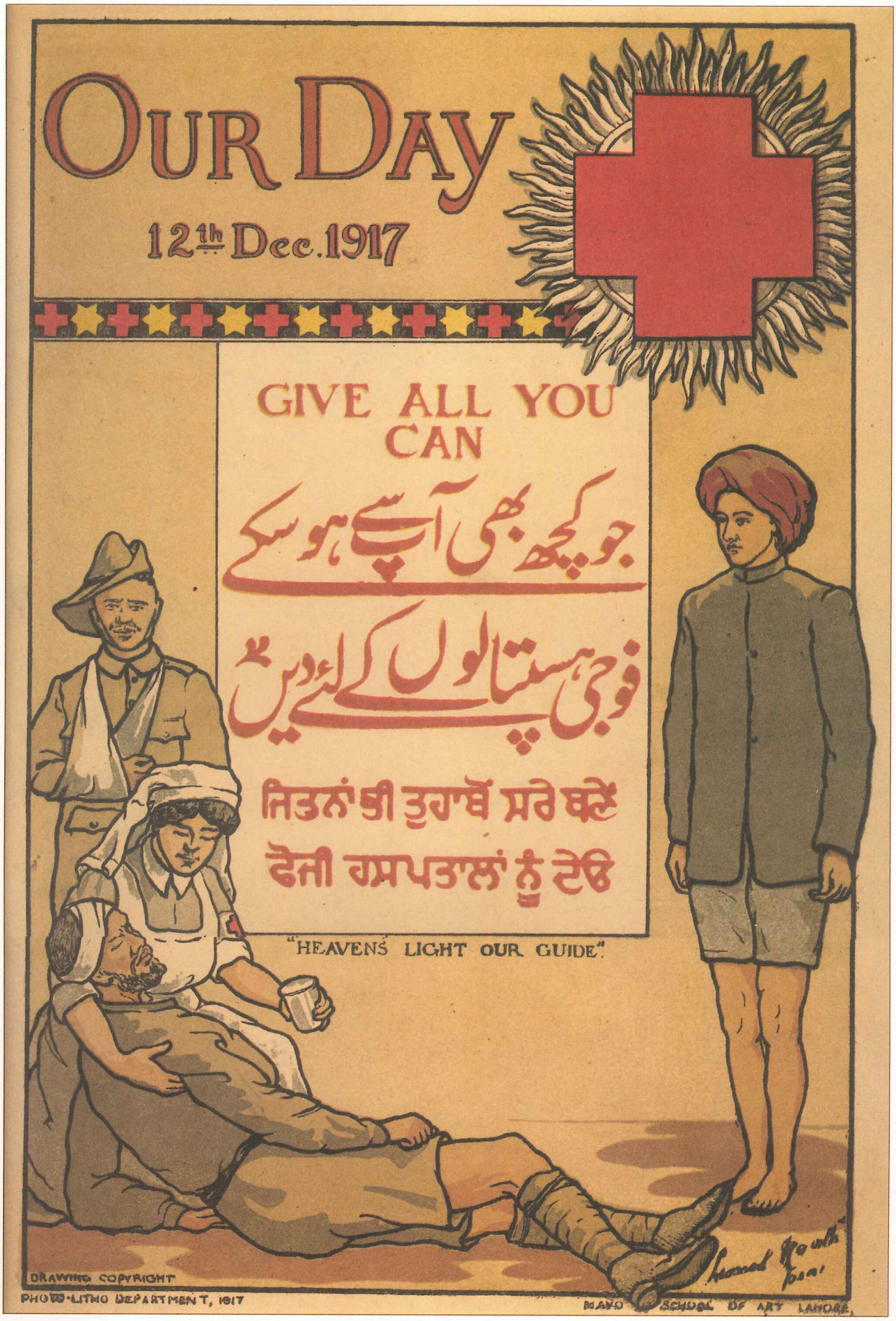
OUR DAY, 12 DECEMBER 1917.

Lionel Heath

The poster encouraging the public, in three languages, to contribute to the cause.

Size: 27.9x38.1 cm

2.



CHROMOLITHOGRAPHY AND THE MAYO SCHOOL OF ART, LAHORE

THE CHROMOLITHOGRAPHS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

EXHIBITION OF CRAFT WORKS is a poster advertising a crafts exhibition of the Mayo School of Art which was to be held at the Central Museum, Lahore, in April 1917 *(Figure 1)*. It is attributed to the principal of MSA, Lionel Heath (1912–1929).

The illustration depicts a young craftsman wearing indigenous attire and *khussas* (local footwear), holding his 'traditional' tools, standing upright to model for an artist. The latter sits cross-legged on the floor and is dressed in Anglo-Indian clothes and a turban. The presence of the craftsman suggests that he is not only the producer of the exhibited craftwork but is also an ethnographic representation of the 'tradition' itself. The text of the advertisement is inscribed on a scroll which seems like a Mughal *farman* (order), adding to the aura of timeless tradition.

OUR DAY is a British propaganda poster of the First World War (1914–1918), signed and copyrighted by Lionel Heath *(Figure 2)*, aimed at soliciting charity from the Indian public for military hospitals and the Red Cross Organisation (the logo of which is prominently displayed in the top right corner encircled by the heraldic sign of the sun with countless wavy rays). It shows a barefooted young Indian spectator, wearing shorts, an Indian jacket and turban, observing a female nurse treating an injured soldier, and the figure of a uniformed soldier with a bandaged arm in the background. The spectator signifies a passive Indian public, witnessing a scene after action on the battlefield. The text, encouraging people to provide financial support, is written in English, Urdu and Gurmukhi, the languages spoken by the Anglo-Indian, Muslim and Sikh communities in the Punjab, the latter two forming the bulk of soldiers in the British Indian Army. The appeal is intended to create a moral consensus on the usefulness of the imperial army and the war, which required support from within Europe and the colonies as well to sustain it.

The First World War proved to be a watershed in the history of advertising and propaganda posters, as it *saw the resources of states being invested in poster production on a scale hitherto unknown*. These posters were commissioned and printed with the support of the Parliamentary Recruitment Committee of War Office and carried *typographical appeals usually invoking the 'King and the Country'*, yet others *involved sophisticated appeals to instincts, combining image with text*.[20]

'KHUBSURAT BALA' (BEAUTIFUL TEMPTRESS) AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS–1920 are two surviving coloured lithographs which were drawn by Abdur Rehman Chughtai, a student and later teacher at the MSA *(Figures 3&4)*.

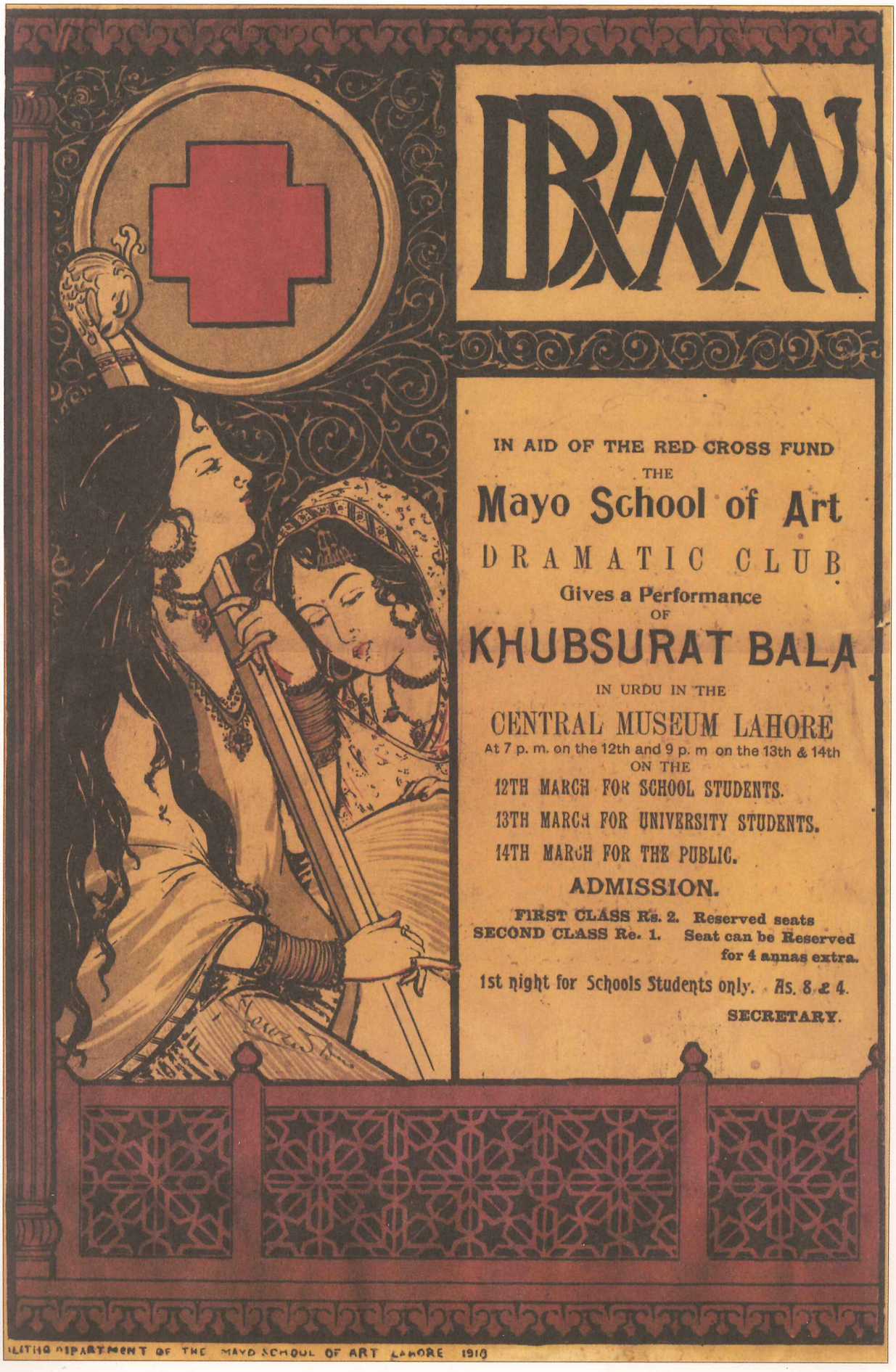
Khubsurat Bala is a war poster advertising a performance of the dramatics club of the Mayo School of Art which was to be held in the Central Museum Lahore in March 1918, to raise aid for the Red Cross organisation; it bears the signature of Feroz uddin. The play is written by Aga Hashr Kashmiri, the lead stage writer for the New Alfred Theatrical Company. It is a legend of good and evil set in the court politics of medieval styled Indian kingdoms. The main character of this four-act play is a power-hungry queen who attempts to usurp the power of legitimate heirs to the

Abdur Rehman Chughtai, (student at MSA, 1911–1913 CE), whose draftsmanship and dynamic use of colour were his most cited qualities, realized the potential of colour lithography for reproducing his paintings.[21] An instructor in the photo-lithography department of the school (1916–1925 CE), he went on to study print-making in London from 1932–1936 CE. Though credited to be the first Indian artist in north-western India who pioneered the art of printing paintings, his career as a painter of poetic themes is more widely known.

The play *Khubsurat Bala* was written by Aga Hashr Kashmiri who was one of the better known writers of the popular form of theatre known as 'Parsee musicals' that appeared in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The Urdu language plays were set to music with the assistance of several Muslim poets and also included dance performances. Staged by the Victoria Theatrical Company, and the New Alfred Company, and supported by the Parsee entrepreneurs of Bombay, such as Pestonji Framji and Khurshidji Balliwallah, the Parsee musicals remained active until the development of the film industry in the 1930s in India.[22]

Figure 3. (Right) Poster
KHUBSURAT BALA
Attributed to Chughtai carrying signature of Feroz uddin, 1918.
Size: 30x45.2 cm

3.



CHROMOLITHOGRAPHY AND THE MAYO SCHOOL OF ART, LAHORE

throne by intrigues and murders but is finally defeated, allowing justice to prevail over anarchy and despotism.[23] This lithograph is reminiscent of the entertainment posters of Aubrey Beardsley, an English artist of the late nineteenth century. Illustrating a scene from the drama, the left half shows two female figures, richly adorned and bejewelled, the woman with long loose hair playing a musical instrument, while the other enjoys her performance with closed eyes. The lower part of the picture is decorated with geometric patterns locally called *Pinjra* works, which indicates the MSA's official concern with conserving the indigenous 'tradition' of the Punjab. A Red Cross symbol, enclosed in a circle, is placed above the figures in a background of arabesque patterns.

The front of one calendar *(Figure 4)* highlights the figure of a Muslim astrologer, seated in a speculative stance, wearing a richly adorned robe, cap and a pair of spectacles. On a raised desk lies a compass and an unrolled sheet of paper, revealing the drawing of a natal chart. Interestingly, casting charts at the time of birth was a customary practice in India, irrespective of religion.

DIOCESE OF LAHORE, BOARD OF EDUCATION is an illustration for an educational certificate commissioned by the diocese, which was established in 1880 *(Figure 5)*. This certificate is one of several versions in the NCAA. Two female figures are shown in front of a Gothic arch; one is kneeling in prayer while the other is standing, holding the Bible. The emblem of the Diocese of Lahore is visible in the top centre of the frame.

'ILM-E ADAB' (THE KNOWLEDGE OF LITERATURE) is a cover for 'a book of morals', designed in 1920, by a first-year student, Kundan Lal, of the photolithography department *(Figure 6)*. It is decorated by a stylised vine that appears as a common decorative element in Persian paintings.

CONCLUSION

This eclectic assortment of lithographs constitutes a rich source that enables an understanding of the evolution and practice of printmaking in the region. They also demonstrate the stylistic influences and techniques prevailing in early twentieth century north-western India and comment on the events unfolding at the time.

4.

Figure 4. Calendar cover page
NEW YEAR GREETINGS
Arif Rehman Chughtai, 1920.

Figure 5. (Right) Certificate
DIOCESE OF LAHORE,
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Lionel Heath, 1917.
Size: 26.7x39.4 cm

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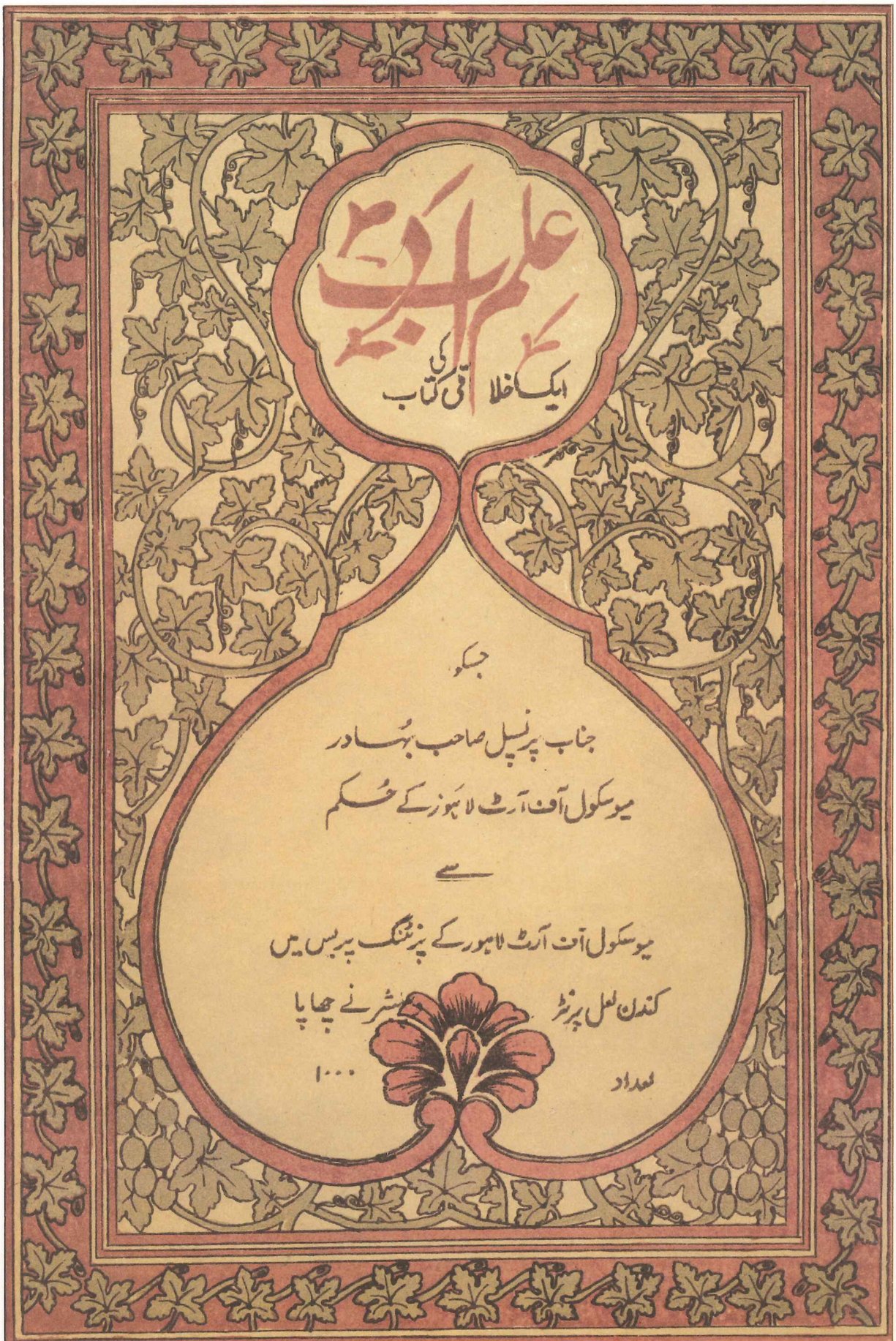
5.

CHROMOLITHOGRAPHY AND THE MAYO SCHOOL OF ART, LAHORE

6.



KUNDANLAL STUDENT 1st YEAR LATHO CLASS MAYO SCHOOL OF ART LAHORE, 1920

NADEEM OMAR TARAR

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The author acknowledges the help of Anwar Saeed, Naazish Ata-ullah, Kamil Khan Mumtaz, Taimoor Mumtaz, Ahmad Ali, Samina Choonara and Izzah Khan. And the assistance in archival research on MSA by Hussain A. Khan.

Figure 6. (Left) Book cover
'ILM-E-ADAB'
THE KNOWLEDGE OF LITERATURE
Lithograph by Kundan Lal, 1920
The text in Urdu mentions the principal, Mayo School of Art, Lahore, Printing Press and the number of copies (1000) printed.
Size: 27.9x38.1 cm

1.

THE SCISSORS
MADE IN
MADRAS
SAFETY MATCHES

2–4.

THREE STARS
MADE BY JÖNKÖPING-VULCAN Co.
JÖNKÖPING, SWEDEN.
SAFETY MATCHES

THREE CRESCENTS
IMPREGNATED
DAMP PROOF
TRADE MARK
MADE IN BURMA
ADAMJEE HAJEE DAWOOD & Co. Ltd.
RANGOON

THREE FLOWERS
THE MALABAR MATCH FACTORY
SHORANUR, S. MALABAR.
SAFETY MATCHES

5–7.

THREE LIONS
MADE IN SWEDEN
SAFETY MATCHES

THREE HORSES
MADE IN INDIA
SAFETY MATCHES

C. A. MOHAMMAD.
THREE DEER
SAFETY MATCHES
MADE IN CALCUTTA
THE CENTRAL INDIA MATCH FCT.

8–10.

THE THREE BELLS
MADE IN SWEDEN

THREE MONKEYS
SAFETY MATCHES

大吉公司
三反牌

SAFETY MATCH BOX LABELS (1925–1935 CE)

LUTFULLAH KHAN

This may come as a surprise, but the current label of the Safety Match Box *(Figure 1)* in red, black, and ochre, depicting a pair of scissors (a common household item in Pakistan) was being printed in undivided India in 1925 CE—the year this match box labels collection started in Madras (now Chennai). Also familiar is the Three Stars packaging, one of a 'group of three' *(Figures 2–10)*.

Most match box labels in the twentieth century were designed and manufactured in the Indian subcontinent in factories established by the Swedish company, Svenska Tändsticks Aktiebolaget (STA), during the years of the First World War and the 1920s. This was the period during which the STA extensively expanded to thirty-three countries, including India.[1,2]

The design of the match box labels evolved in Sweden—the largest match manufacturer in the world—and the styles established, served as a standard for manufacturers everywhere. Designers took into consideration the traditions and tastes of the peoples where the product was to be consumed. The illustrations on the packaging reflected a diversity of topics—religion *(Figures 11–19)*, personalities *(Figures 20–34)*, wildlife *(Figures 35–47)*, fruit, flora and fauna *(Figures 48–53)*, travel and technology *(Figures 54–59)* and nationalism *(Figures 60–63)*—which chronicle an inclusive culture and lifestyle. Certain designs were also available in the West where they represented the 'exotic' for the residents.

A few of the labels have remained unchanged, e.g. the Three Stars *(Figure 2)* introduced in 1887 and sold throughout the British Empire. The main export brand of the Swedish factory in Jönköping, it continues to be produced today, symbolising quality, and creating brand loyalty.[3]

The usual size of the match box was 51x32 mm (with larger ones 57x102 mm). The typography was upper case sans serif, which allowed maximum words to inhabit the miniature space while maintaining legibility. Besides the image, the labels usually carried the name of the manufacturer and the location (country or city) where it was printed or produced. The name of the designer and the date of manufacture were not mentioned.

Figure 1. (Left) THE SCISSORS SAFETY MATCH BOX LABEL *(enlarged from 51x32 mm)*

Figures 2–10. (Left) THE POWER OF THREE

These labels formed part of a popular series of a 'group of three' with *Three Stars* being one of the most widely known brands in the world. Other examples of labels 'Made in Sweden' were *Three Lions* and *The Three Bells*. The labels printed in factories within the subcontinent include *Three Crescents, Three Flowers, Three Deer, Three Horses* and *Three Monkeys* which were expounding the virtues of 'See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil'. Interestingly, another one of the labels carried three figures in traditional attire from south-east Asia.

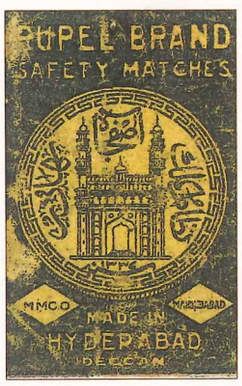
Figures 11–19. RELIGION

11–16.

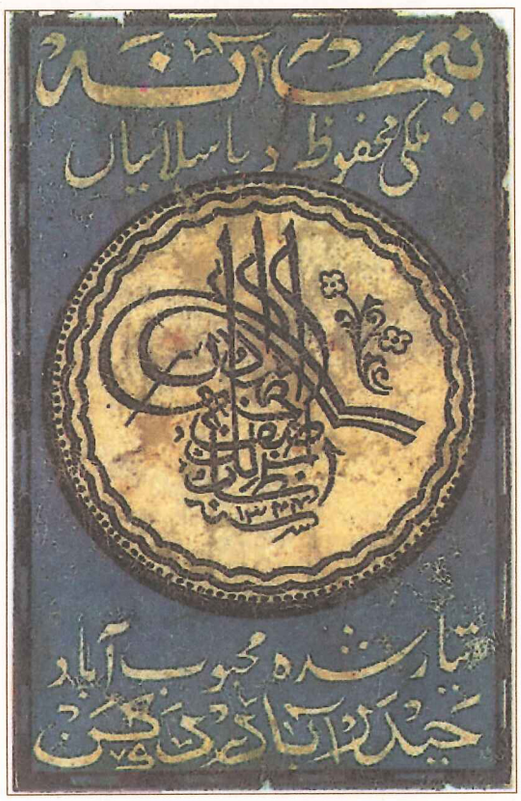
Match box labels *(right)* featuring Hindu deities, many of whom are within an oval, reminiscent of the halo—a frequent element in religious iconography.

Figures 11–16. This image of *Tara Mai*, a divine force which assumes different roles, shows her role as the goddess of liberation, *Kali Mata*, with four arms, one hand holding a sickle-shaped, blood-smeared sword, wearing a necklace of skulls with her tongue protruding from the mouth; *Kalinga*, the god of thunder; *Sri Hari*, an incarnation of *Vishnu*, the god of sustenance, shown travelling on his vehicle *Garuda*—the golden sunbird which is an enemy of serpents; *Gayatri*, considered the mother of all Vedas (the ancient Hindu scriptures) is the goddess of education, usually accompanied by a swan (here a duck) holding a book in one hand and a rosary in the other; *Hanuman*, the monkey hero from the epic Ramayana, symbolizes the ideals of loyalty and service; *Ganapathy* or *Ganesha*, the most beloved of all Hindu deities, is the remover of all obstacles who is called upon before the start of new ventures—he has an elephant head and is usually shown with four arms.
(All labels actual size).

17–18.



19.



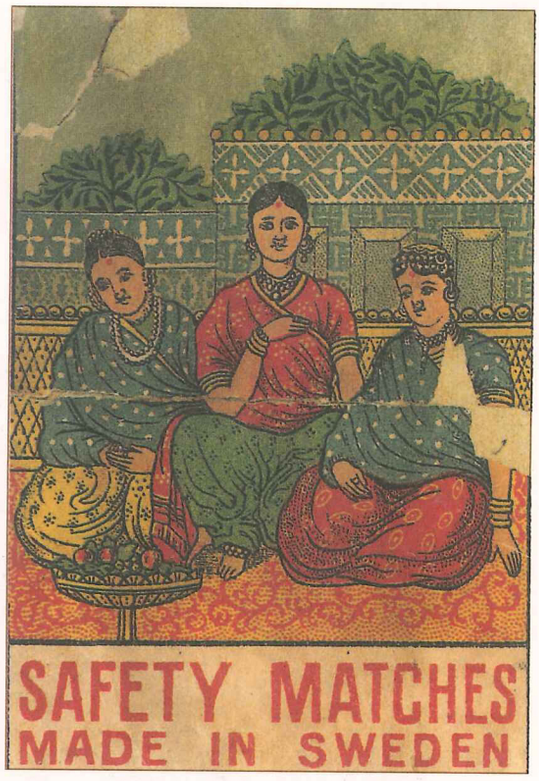
These labels were made in the autonomous princely state of Hyderabad, Deccan. In keeping with the Islamic tradition of the non-figurative depiction of sacred subjects, these images represented architecture and calligraphy.

Figures 17&18. (Above) *The Charminar* (Four Minarets), a monument constructed in 1591 CE to define the intersection of four major roads in the centre of the city of Hyderabad, Deccan. The inscription bears the name of Prince Nizam-ul Mulk Asif Jah Bahadur who ruled between 1724 and 1748 CE.

Figure 19. (Left) A *tughra*, the calligraphic emblem of the Nizam dated 1344 *Hijri* (1923 CE). Manufactured in Mahbubabad, Hyderabad, Deccan. *(Enlarged from 32x51 mm).*

20–25.

26.



PERSONALITIES

Portraits of royalty and rulers of the time expressing the political affiliations of the Indians during the 1920s.

Figures 20–25. Presented here are *Queen Victoria Mary (Made in Czechoslovakia)*; a *Maharaja*; the fez-wearing *S. Mohamed Pasha* and *Qazi Shukri Pasha* from Turkey; and the *Shah of Persia*. Figure 22 is not named. *(All labels actual size)*.

Figure 26. (Above) Three women in typical Indian attire, tagged *Made in Sweden*, hint at the incorporation of indigenous personalities to ensure effective local marketing.

27–30.

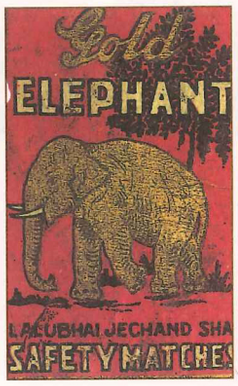
31–34.

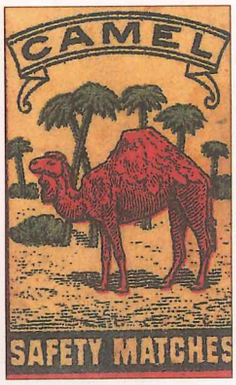
Figures 27–34. These images appear to be subcontinental celebrities from the entertainment world of music, dance, and theatre. This is enhanced in some labels by the inclusion of theatre curtains framing the central figure. Most bear the name of the performing artist: *Man-Mohin, Kamala, The Chandbibi* while the match box labelled *The Girl* shows a lady clad in a crimson sari taking a stroll in the garden. Also shown are *Krishna Brand, Baijee* and an indigo rendition of *Miss Resham*, reminiscent of the actress Sarah Bernhardt in Art Nouveau posters designed by Alphonse Mucha. The Western influence is also represented by the dress of *Miss Mahtab*. *(Reduced from actual size).*

35.

36–39.

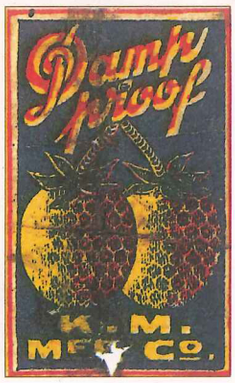
40–43.





44–47.

48–53.



Figures 35–39. WILD LIFE

These five labels cover the theme of hunting in a jungle. The first labelled *Gurka Gurki* sports the king of the jungle approaching a monkey; *Tiger Hunt* reveals a hunter in a Safari suit, riding an elephant, aiming his gun at a roaring tiger; *Cheeta Fight* displays a huntsman with a dog attacking his prey; *Warrior Brand* and *The Crocodile* feature respectively, a Native American 'Indian' with a bow and arrow and an African escaping from a crocodile.

Figures 40–47. These set of labels exhibit animals in the favourite colour combination of red, black and mustard, perhaps demonstrating budget constraints. The brand names are highlighted by placing them in a scroll-like ribbon cartouche. The designs show animals particular to the region and include *The Tiger, Elephant, The Buffalo, Camel, Cow Head, Squirrel Brand* and a monkey. The last label, *The Stag*, not a subcontinental animal, is 'Made in Sweden'.

Figures 48–53. FRUIT, FLORA AND FAUNA

The Poppy, The Flower Basket, Panpatty (the betel leaf), pineapples, *Two Pomegrans* and *Three Mangoes* are flowers and fruits native to the subcontinent.

(All labels are actual size except Gurka Gurki, enlarged from 51x32 mm)

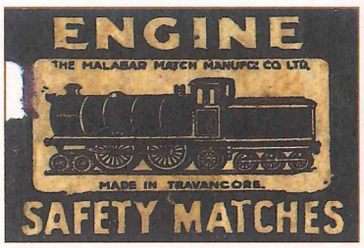
Figures 54–59. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY

Images demonstrating modes of transport over land, air and sea—ranging from the horse, the *Bullock Cart* and *The Ship*, to the latest technological innovations of the time, the *Engine*, and *The Airship*.

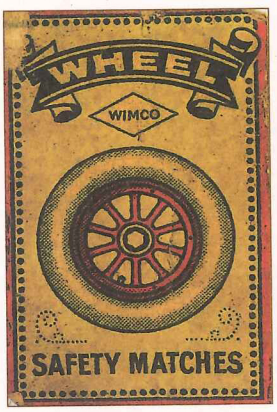
Figures 60–63. NATIONALISM/SYMBOLISM

The *Wheel (Figure 60)* denotes the 'charkha' or the spinning wheel which came to symbolise the Indian Independence movement and also forms a part of the tricoloured flag of India *(Figures 61–62)*. *Swadeshi Crescent (Figure 63)* in which 'swadeshi', meaning 'of our own country or home-produced', expressed a determination by the people of India to be self-reliant, and included a strict boycott of imported products, especially British textiles. This non-violent protest was one of the most significant representations of Indian unity, spread by word and the press, and it was this boycott that actually led to the government clamping down on the activities of Swadeshi promoters.[4]

54–59.



60–62.



63.

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1.

الله اکبر

ای جهان دیده بود حوش از تو — هیچ خیری نبود پیش از تو
در بدایت بدایت همه خیر — در نهایت نهایت همه خیر

ای برازنده سپهر بلند — انجم افروز انجمن پیوند
آفریننده خرد این جود — مبدع و آفریدگار وجود

بسیار مند گشته از تو کار همه — ای همه آفریدگار همه
هستی و نیست مثل و مانندت — عاقلان خرد چنین دانندت

روشنی بخش اصل بینائی — نه بصورت بصورت آرائی
بحیاتست زنده موجوداتت — زنده دل کز وجود تست حیات

ای جهان بر از هیچ بنیادت — هم تو انجش و هم تو آزادت
نام تو ابتدا ز ما پیست — اول اغار و آخر انجا پیست

اول الاولی بسبق شمار — و آخر الآخری بآخر کار
هست و بود همه هست تو — بازگشت همه به تست تو

بسته بر حضرت تو راه خیال — بر درت ناشسته گرد زوال
تو نزادی و آن دگر زادند — تو خدائی و آن دگر بادند

نیک اندیشه راه بنمائی — نیکی کمتر کار بگشائی
وانکه ما اهل سجده شد سر او — قفل بر قفل بسته شد در او

تو دهی صبح را شب افروزی — روز را مرغ و مرغ را روزی
تو سپردی بآفتاب و بماه — دو سرا پرده سفید و سیاه

روز و شب سالکان راه تو اند — گرد پیکان بارگاه تو اند
جز به حکم تو نیک و بد نکنند — هیچ کاری بحکم خود نکنند

تو برافروختی درون دماغ — خردی تابناک تر ز چراغ
با همه زیرکی که در خرد هست — هیچ دست از تو به جامی دست

چون خرد در رو تو پی گردد — گرد این کار و هم بی گردد
چابکی جوهر شد هست در تن ما هست — کس نداند که جای او بکجاست

تو که جوهر نه ای نداری جای — چون رسد در تو هم شفیه رای
رهنمائی و رهنمایت نه — همه جائی و تو بی جایت نه

ما که جزوی ز نبع گردونیم — با تو بیرون نهفت بیرونیم
عقل کل کز تو یافت این راه — هم ز هیبت نکرده در تو نگاه

ای ز روز سفید تا شب داج — به مددهای فیض تو محتاج
حال گردان تو بی بهره شبانی — جز تو کس نیست حال کس دانی

تا نخواهی تو نیک و بد نبود — هستی کس بذات تو نبود
تو دهی و تو ازی از کل نیک پاک — اش لعل و لعل آتش رنگ

کیتی

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MINIATURE PAINTING IN NIZAMI'S KHAMSA

AKBAR NAQVI

RESEARCH AND TRANSLATION FROM THE PERSIAN BY PROFESSOR REHANA AFSAR, DEPARTMENT OF PERSIAN, UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI.

Nizami, the famous poet of Iran, was born Abu Muhammad Ilias Yusuf ibn Zaqi Muayad, in Gyanj, in 1140 or 1141 CE. He knew the Arabic and Persian languages, and was well versed in ancient Indian and Muslim philosophy, history, theology, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and poetics.

He was married for seven years to Afag, a beautiful Turk, who exerted a great deal of influence on him and his literary career; however, she died leaving him an infant son Muhammad. Nizami gave all his love to his son, and in each of his poems he devoted a chapter containing admonition and advice for him.

Nizami was attracted to Sufism because of its opposition to the existing social system, and all his works carry the message that those invested with power and authority must use their influence to serve society and humanity.

His great works include the *Khamsa* (collection of five poems), which remain immensely popular, as they depict the ideals of humanism, freedom, justice, pure love, and hatred of oppression. A majority of its manuscripts are illuminated with fine miniatures.

The *Khamsa* comprises *Makhzan-ul Asrar* (The Depository of Secrets), *Layla Majnun, Khusrow and Shirin, Haft Paikar* (The Seven Beauties) and *Iskandernama* (The Book of Alexander).

Figure 1. TEXT PAGE
Originally published/produced in India, 1595.
Language: Persian
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This text page, decorated with drawings in the margins, is from the poem Haft Paikar from a sixteenth century manuscript of Nizami's Khamsa. It begins traditionally with a chapter devoted to lauding Almighty God and a prayer to Him.

Everything begins and ends with You.
You have created everything; You have fashioned the sky above and given light to the stars.
You have given life to everything, and to You all shall return.
You have created the body and soul.
Our thoughts are because of Your blessings.
You show us the path which leads to You,
and with one key, can open all doors for us.
And the one who is unworthy and does not bow down to You,
to him you close your doors of mercy (referring to Iblis, Satan).
You have created the night and the day, the dawn and the dusk.
You provide sustenance to the birds.
Nothing is done without You ordaining it.
We pray to You to help and guide us.

For everything there is an ornament.[1]

Miniature, a narrow gate, opens up an entire world.
The details of a thing can be the sign of a new world
which, like all worlds, contains the attributes of greatness.[2]

قطرہ میں دریا دکھائی دے اور جزو میں کل کھیل لڑکوں کا ہوا دیدۂ بینا نہ ہوا

If one does not see an ocean in a drop & the universe in a particle,
Then one sees with the eye of a child and not of an experienced person—Mirza Ghalib.

Miniature painting is a book art. It enhances the text visually with adornments of light and beauty, and opens it to the fullest possibilities of thought and feeling. Over a history of almost a thousand years, books of zoology, botany, astronomy, horticulture, and medicine were adorned with perceptions of visual felicity and understanding. Thereafter, myths, legends, romantic tales, and adventures were inset with gems of robust lines and glowing colours, or *khat* and *rung*. The art/craft of miniature was *khush khati* which meant handsome penmanship. It complemented calligraphy, the mother of all arts/crafts of the Muslim civilization.

It was in the *kutub khana* (house of books) of Emperor Humayun, in the old fort of Delhi, established on the model of Shah Tahmasp Safavi, in Isfahan, that the Mughal style of miniature painting emerged in the sixteenth century. The Muslim tradition evoked Adam's memory of his lost paradise on earth and never tired of transforming nature into his lost home; Allah compensated him for his sin and our artists, craftsmen and poets jubilated over the fact. Poetry, art/craft recalled the event through *tamsil*—signs and symbols—from nature, the cosmos, geometry and numbers. When Emperor Akbar was accused by his intemperate critic, the orthodox religious scholar, Badayuni, of committing sin for patronizing his *kutub khana*, he replied that he was engaged only in *zikr*—hymns of praise to Allah.

The page of the miniature was the *qartase abiyaz*—the white surface of the cosmic egg on which were wrought things of beauty. The page also signified the *farman* or royal proclamation. More than this, it was a text of love and its dialectical discourse on the Highest Authority. Muslim art/craft was not religious; it was not secular either, in the European sense. The forms of *adab*,

literature of love, and *adaab* (or etiquettes) skills that crafted its mythic freedom were called *khushbayani* or *khushqalami*. The calligrapher and painter of miniature made the power of the pen turn festive in *ishq* or love.

Pleasure, and a spiritual sense of well-being, may have been what traditional Muslim art/craft wanted, but, angst galvanized lines and colours and lifted *tamsil* from the existential to the transcendental plane. In fact, the two were interconnected. The plaintive sound of Maulana Rumi's *ney* evoked nostalgia as if the pain of loss could not be excluded from the pleasures of love:

Hearken to this Reed forlorn,
Breathing, ever since 'twas torn
From its rushy bed, a strain
Of impassioned love and pain.[3]

The *ney* lamented the loss of its home but celebrated its abduction and migration which made it a crafted musical instrument. Muslim art/craft was human, and the curse of Adam, redeemed by man was its *élan vitale*. Muslim fabricators of signs and symbols could not compete with Allah by creating or improving upon His creation. It was not a creative rendition of nature but an ornamental replica of nature and workings of the heart and mind. After all, nature was the silent Qur'an; objects of nature and the universe were *ayat*, signs of Allah. The ornaments of art/craft visualized the offerings of the human heart. The difference between nature and art/craft was that the former was crafted by Allah while the latter was human handiwork. One deciphered the signs of aural and visual *muraqqa* or illuminated masterwork, of the First Maker who, instantaneously and joyously created light and the universe with a few words. No wonder, then, that the great eighteenth century Urdu poet, Mir Taqi Mir, gave rein to the permissible audacity of a poet and wrote,

تیرا رخِ مخطّط قرآن ہے ہمارا بوسہ بھی لیں تو کیا ہے ایمان ہے ہمارا

Your graphic portrait is my Qur'an,
Why shouldn't I kiss when it is permissible in my faith.

He imagined his beloved as a structure of graphemes which was as much a figure of speech as a vision of spiritual fulfilment within the parameters of his cosmopolitan Indo-Arabic-Persian culture.

The *Khamsa* of Nizami has five stories of love and adventure in the tradition of the oral *dastan* (legend) of Arab and Persian literature. The book celebrates, apart from the tales, the tradition of painting and calligraphy of Mughal India—*al-Hind* in the Muslim universe. The book, torn from limb to limb, and in very privileged custody of European and American museums, speaks to us of historical loss in addition to Adam's curse. Displaced, even now, it possesses its original dynamics thanks to its courtesies of vision, insight and skill.

Through the handwritten pages of the text and its pictorial ornaments we enter the domain of the poets and artists that was autonomous and protected from the stricture of the minatory figures of Urdu and Persian love poetry, called *muhtasib, wayez* and *sheikh*—censor, preacher and judge. In *alamul khayal*, the world of imagination, and *alamul missal*,

Figure 2. NIZAMI ENTERTAINING HIS SON

Illustrator: Khem Kharan
Originally published/produced in India, 1595.
Language: Persian
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In this miniature, Nizami praises Minuchir, Prince of Shirwan, as he entrusts his son Muhammad to the Prince's care. It was at Prince Minuchir's request that Nizami wrote the poem of Layla Majnun.

Layla and Qais were childhood friends and as they grew older their friendship evolved into love. However, when Layla's father refused to allow them to marry, Qais left home for the desert and wrote passionate poetry of his love for Layla. This earned him the reputation of 'Majnun' (the mad man). Layla married another, but died shortly after and the news of her demise killed Majnun.

Nizami painted Layla not just as an oriental beauty but also with a captivating personality. He captures the most subtle of emotions and the conflict between love and duty. Layla's devotion to Qais was looked down upon in the society and culture of the time; she, therefore, complied with the wishes of her father as well as societal norms but was unable to renounce her love for her childhood sweetheart.

2.

نور نظر بزرگ واران
محراب نما تاجداران
بر سر تخت و افسر تاج
کاقبال بروی اوست محتاج
ای از شرف تو شاهزاده
چشم ملک اختشان گشاده
مروج دو مملکت بشاهی
چون سپ دو رنگ صبحگاهی
یک تخم بخسروی نشانده
از تخمه کیقباد مانده
شروان ز تو قیروان جلالت
خزران ز تو خیزران عدالت

the world of examples, it was permissible to spin yarns and dreams without fear of hell: the poet and artist/craftsman were free to practise their respective skills and pursue their art out of love. The great eighteenth century poet and practising Sufi leader, Khawaja Mir Dard, warned the self-righteous and censorious:

مت عبادت پہ بھولیو زاہد سب طفیلِ گناہِ آدم ہے

O Zahid, don't ever forget that
All this around us is because of Adam's sin.

The world and life on earth was created by Allah for Adam out of love for His finest creation. It was required of us to understand the nature of man and his artistic/craft aspirations.

In Nizami's second poem, *Khusrow and Shirin*, featuring eternal love between star-crossed lovers, Shirin searches for her beloved, in a quest for eternal unity, which blooms under her feet into ornamental *charbagh* or Persian gardens of natural geometry and geometric naturalism. Even wilderness becomes a mythic oasis because she was present there. Such is the power of unrequited love that Farhad, who loves her without hope, transforms a valley of mountains into a garden of sculpture. Shirin loves impossibly and through this she finds herself. Her lover Khusrow, divided between love and geopolitics, becomes a footnote in history compared to Farhad who replaces him and moves to the centre.

Calligraphers and painters from Iran, and Indian painters from Gujarat, Kashmir and Lahore collaborated to develop a new style that bore the name of the Mughal dynasty. One of the miniatures of the *Khamsa* shows Abd al-Rahim Ambarin Qalam, the calligrapher, and the painter, Dawlat, who signed and painted it in 1610 CE *(Figure 3)*, sitting across one another. They are close, nevertheless, in an iconic state of collaboration. Such felicities of skill devoted to celebrate the broken heart were said to reach the highest, even Allah. Indeed, this was the merit of art/craft!

The *Khamsa* may have been crafted in Akbar's *kutub khana* in the Lahore Fort. Each tale, while reflecting the world of imagination, was also the product of the geopolitics of its age. Akbar's political manifesto was summed up in one word, *sulah-e kul*—harmony of the planets and stars between diverse nationalities, cultures, languages and religions of his empire. The design of peace between competing autonomies of details was based on Allah's justice.

Anthropologists hold that a garden grew in the back of primitive man's mind. Maulana Rumi spoke of an ant that fell by accident on the page of a manuscript and discovered that it was in a garden of bliss. Muslim artists suffered no better or worse than the ant that had accidentally dropped into *alam-ul khayal* (world of imagination) and *alam-ul missal* (world of examples), and partook of the pleasures of the divinely gifted ability to transform dross into gold as had the proverbial alchemists.

The plain of Shirin, or terrain of love, was visited by those who knew the meaning of *ishq* and its agony and ecstasy. It was only here that lovers could produce 'monuments of unageing intellect'. Perhaps, it was the great Anglo-Irish poet of the twentieth century, W.B. Yeats who understood

Figure 3. ABD AL-RAHIM AND DAWLAT

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The scribe of the manuscript Abd al-Rahim and the artist Dawlat, together. Another inscription to Jahangir can be seen on the carpet.

3.

فلک را بحشمت گرانید دار
بر وداد و دین جهد و دوپاید
اتمام یافت و انجام پذیرفت این کتاب گرامی بر رسم خزانه
و کتابخانه عالی بندگان حضرت خلافت پناهی ظل الله
خسرو و خسروان آفاق چراغ جهان افروز نه طاق ثبات نوای تخت
و دیهیم فرمان فرمای هفت اقلیم شهریار سعادت رخش ملک ستان جهان بخش قدر شناس
بلندان دریای موج خیز عالم جود سپهر مملکت آرای جهان وجود رفعت آرای اورنگ سپر افرازی
ابوالفتح جلال الدین محمد اکبر
پادشاه غازی خلد الله ظلال سلطنته و اقباله بکلک ارادت
سلک نبل قدیم شهیر الحقیر عبد الرحیم در بیست و چهارم ماه
از سال جلوس ابد پیوند پادشاهی امید که بر صفحه
کاینات تا نام و نشان قلم و رقم باشد منشور سلطنت و
اقبال بطغرای عنوانی آنحضرت
سربلندی ما و بعزت پاکان پاک نهاد
تمت تم

the ornament better than the European scholars of Islamic arts. He writes in *Sailing to Byzantium* in 1927:

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and golden enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.[4]

The garden, ornamented with the passion of love, is the mythic and formal format of Muslim art/craft. The garden was the product, to borrow Gaston Bachelard's words, of 'miniaturizing imagination'.[5] Detailing of space gave the miniature its hallucinatory quality. The difference between taking 'in everything at a glance' and 'the discursive impishness of the clever miniaturist' is that of a philosopher who sees large at once and a craftsman who insists that he must probe details to reach the totality of the vision. He looks 'at a miniature' with 'unflagging attention required to integrate all the detail'.[6] Bachelard said that miniature breathes cosmic space[7] because 'it seems that by living in the world of miniature, one relaxes in a small space'.[8] We really do in the miniatures of Nizami's *Khamsa*, and others of their kind. We become intimate with space which on its 'plain is the sentiment that exalts us', as Rilke puts it.[9]

This was Shirin's plain of love without loss or gain. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the great twentieth century Urdu poet, explains the point with modern rudeness:

اپنی تکمیل کر رہا تھا میں مجھ کو تم سے تو پیار نہیں!

I was completing myself
I wasn't in love with you.

Shirin completed herself in her adventure. Italo Calvino in *Nezami's Seven Princesses* writes that 'the typical structure of an initiation tale demands that the hero undergo several trials to win both the hand of the girl he loves and a royal throne'.[10] Syed Sharfuddin Maneri, a great Sufi *buzurg* (elder) of Bengal and Bihar in the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries writes in one of his letters: 'The sign of the traveller is that he is happy even when he does not get what he wants. In this way he will be free of all bonds'.[11] Shirin, a woman of beauty and courage, was the 'hero' who entered the collective memory of mankind.

If the flat surface of the miniature gives us pleasure beyond understanding on one hand, the text also exposes us to the kinetic nervousness of letters. Be it miniature or the handwritten text, we experience the journey of pen-in-hand drawing of figures, ornaments, and the volume of the poet's voice. The contour and curve of letters were 'concentrated in a nucleus or *nuqtah*, a spore, a dynamized centre'.[12] The urge to round off, complete one's self, was embedded in Arabic script. This was what made it an example of how to capture frenzied motion in motionlessness. Shirin's love was the path of the pen.

The contradictions of love, its pain and pleasure, were articulated, for example, in one of the pages of the *Khamsa (Figure 5)* against a typical

Figure 4. TWO PEOPLE ON HORSEBACK MEETING *Khusrow and Shirin*

Illustrator: Nanha
Language: Persian
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Khusrow and Shirin *was commissioned by Tughrul bin Arsalan, a Suljuk king, in 1181* CE *(570–575 Hijri).*

In the miniature on the left—Khusrow mounted on his loyal horse, Shabdiz (the colour of night)—and Shirin encounter one another for the first time in the hunting ground. They gaze at each other and are 'struck by the arrow of love'. The scripted couplets allude to Khusrow as the heir to the royal throne, and to Shirin's beauty which was reputed 'to have dethroned a hundred kings'.

Legend has it that the two fell in love with each other before they had even met. The artist Shahpur, a friend of Khusrow (vicegerent of Sassanids, the son of Khurmaz) eulogized to him the beauty of Princess Shirin, niece of Queen Makhin Banu. At his request, Shahpur showed her a portrait of Khusrow which resulted in 'reciprocal feelings for him'. However, Khusrow's impending marriage to Maryam, the daughter of the emperor of Byzantine forced the two apart.

Meanwhile, a stonemason, Farhad, who was commissioned to dig a canal in the mountains for milk to flow to the estranged Shirin's palace, became infatuated with the princess. When rumours of his affection reached Khusrow, it ignited the fire of jealousy in him, and he tricked Farhad into believing that Shirin had passed away, resulting in the stonemason's death of a broken heart. Nizami's description of Farhad remains to this day a symbol of pure, unselfish and unrequited love.

Shirin and Khusrow did eventually marry after Maryam died. In a twist to the tale, Khusrow's son, Shiruya, becomes enslaved by Shirin's beauty, and attempted to lure her from his father by deposing him and imprisoning him in a dungeon. Shirin, however, continued to love Khusrow, and Shiruya in frustration has his father assassinated. After his demise, Shirin could not bear to live without him and stabbed herself over his body.

4.

یکی را دسپت شاهی تاج داده
یکی صد تاج را تاراج داده
یکی مرغول عنبر بسته بر گوش
یکی مشکین کند افکنده بر دوش
یکی از طوق خود در آشکسته
یکی بر به ز عنبر طوق بسته
نظر بر یکدگر چندان نهادند
که آب از چشم یکدیگر گشادند
نه از شیرین جدا می گشت پرویز
نه از گلگون کند میکرد شبدیز
طریق دوستی را پاس چستند
ز یکدیگر نشانها باز جستند
چو خسرو دید کان خورشید رخشان
ندانست او که شیرین است یاران
به پرسید از بتان سرو بالا
که ای ماه بتان خورشید والا
چه خواند این بهار دلبر را
چه خواند این بکار شیر را
بشه گفتند کان خوبان فرخار
که شیرین است آن خورشید رخسار

scene of autonomous details forming the decentred unity of design. On the top flowers a garden, extracted from the planets but flourishing under a magnificent dome inlaid with precious stones. The juxtaposition of opposites—colours, flowers and precious, semi-precious stones, planets on a surface representing time past and present eternally—was typical of those who connected with their spiritual *tahzib*, or culture and *rivayet*, tradition.

The garden was a place of peace; it flowered and bore fruit in an ambience of nostalgic pleasure mixed with deep sadness. *Chaman bandi*, putting primal nature within the bounds of a rectangle or square as in Lahore's Shalamar Garden, framed the garden within a garden. Planting a garden was an act of merit. Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India, planted one under his personal supervision in Agra as soon as he had captured the city. In *A Princess's Self-Portrait,* a princess is seated under the shade of trees in a garden *(Figure 5)*. Colourful silken awnings and inlaid marble pavilions, analogical gardens or ornamented nature, complete the architectural and natural details of what Shah Jahan called 'a paradise on earth'.

The ornamental *hashiya* (margin) of the miniature, yet another garden or royal hunt park of infinite ornamental possibilities, composes details within the apparently dispersed unity of design. The perceptual result of a garden cannot be enclosed by anything but manicured strips of another garden. The margin was integral to the design of miniature. Calligraphic pages of the Qur'an and poetry were also framed within the ornamental *hashiya*. Its importance was such that the master narrative of love yielded the centre to one of the incidental and minor narratives. Farhad's story of unrequited love for Shirin is one such example. He went insane, and became a stone cutter like an ancient Sassanid sculptor for royalty, and went around carving images of Shirin from mountainous rocks. Farhad is now a proverbial sculptor of love and has displaced Khusrow, whom Shirin sought, from her story. Ghalib was right to say that Farhad was a leader among lovers:

پیشے میں عیب نہیں رکھیو فرہاد کو نام ہم ہی آشفتہ سروں میں وہ جواں میر بھی تھا

There is no harm in the profession, and don't malign him,
He was once the manly hero of witless people like us.

The pages of *Khamsa*, written by exceptionally skilled wordsmiths, and painted by Muslim and Hindu painters of an emperor's court were gems that only he could command to be made. In the royal *kutub khana,* Hindu scriptures like the Mahabharata and Ramayana as well as legends of *Amir Hamza*, the uncle of our Prophet (PBUH) were translated, hand written, painted, bound and decorated. Akbar's son and successor, Jahangir, claimed in his memoir, that he could discern at a glance the *qalam* or pen of each and every master of his atelier. Among the masters, who worked on the *Khamsa* were Sanvla, a prolific painter of Akbar's atelier who excelled in portrait and landscape and Abdus Samad, the *Shirin Qalam* or 'Sweet of Pen'. The latter was recognized as one of the founders of Mughal School and, in the words of Abul Fazal, 'from bringing out mere forms he came to bring out the inner meaning'. He was also said to have painted seven horsemen playing polo on a grain of rice.[13]

Figure 5. A PRINCESS'S SELF-PORTRAIT
Khusrow and Shirin

Illustrator: Jagannath
Originally published/produced in India, 1595.
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This miniature entitled 'A Princess's Self-Portrait' features a scene from a tale told by a Russian princess, a wife of King Behram. The Russian princess is one of the seven beautiful princesses from seven lands, who were the wives of Behramgur, the Sassanid monarch. They comprise the Haft Paikar *by Nizami.*

Every princess was presented with a palace of a particular colour; a black one for the Indian girl, Furaq; a yellow palace for the Turk, Yagmanaz; a green one for Nizapari from Khoresm; a red one for the Slav, Nasrinnush; a turquoise one for the Maghrib Princess, Azariyun; a sandalwood one for the Rumi beauty, Khumai; and a white palace for the Iranian Princess, Durusti. Behram spent a day of the week with each of his wives, who would relate a tale connected with the colour of their palace.

The script from the miniature conveys the following message from a princess: 'Please inform my admirer not to love me from a distance, but draw close to me like a moth to a flame. This fortress is not for the weak-hearted. He who is courageous will be rewarded with more than he ever desired'.

5.

کو چو پروانه بر نظاره نور
پای در پنجه نکو از دور
بر چنین قلعه مرد باید بار
نیست نامرد را برین در کار
سر گران شکار می باید
نه یکی جان هزار می باید

In the world of Nizami, Shirin was a princess of Azerbaijan who lived in a world of interlocked planes of the then multi-centred, multicultural globe. It was in Akbar's kingdom of diversity and empiric unity—a product of painful and often dangerous experiments spanning over nine hundred years of Muslim presence in India—that the *Khamsa* was written and bejewelled with miniature paintings. An Eastern European princess, presumably a Christian, fell in love with a Persian prince, presumably Zoroastrian. The story of their love was written by a poet of Tabriz, in northern Iran now and ethnically Turkic. Painters of Iran and India, Muslims and Hindus, proud of their faith and ancient cultural lineages, produced the *Khamsa*. In case we dismiss Muslim art/craft as decorative in the manner of standard Western Islamic scholarship, the *Khamsa* miniatures should make us pause, and wonder at their postmodernism. Here heterogeneous peoples, countries and cultures existed side by side as did the past, present and future in animation and spatially like the plains of the ornament.

To give one graphic example, the geography of love in this world stretched from the Adriatic coast to the Arabian Sea and the land mass beyond. Chinese mountains from Persian miniatures, and plantain trees of the Guler miniature of eighteenth century India can be seen in the same miniature of *A Princess's Self-Portrait (Figure 5)*, complimenting one another in a shared world as if the strange were natural and the improbable inevitable. Rich details of architecture, horticulture, zoology, dress, lifestyle and ethnic varieties in each miniature under discussion reflected upon the large-heartedness of a civilization it aspired to plant on earth under a single faith and the sovereignty of the Persian language. The miniature had arisen from visualizing knowledge and *adab* narratives. In their turn, *ilm* (knowledge), and *qissa* (story), were staple narrative structures of the tales and poetry of *tasawwuf*. Informed by love and its epistemology, the aesthetics of Muslim art/craft responded to the responsibility of the lover.

It ought to be noted that love was peripatetic like the empire-building of those who fell for the charms of *al-Hind*. The mythical journey involved arduous motion, exile, homelessness to find a home, and sustained madness. Akbar and Jahangir gravitated to Agra and Lahore to hold their empire and to enjoy a life of opulent pleasure. They enacted the charade of Adam's trauma as a *gharib-ul watan*, exile in poverty, in search of temporary homes. The *kutub khana* followed them without which their happiness would have been impaired. If extending the empire was necessary for survival, the book-making studio was also the certificate of their territorial stake in *alam-ul khayal*, the world of imagination.

The sovereign kingdom of love was inhabited by great women of beauty, strength, passion, and bold action. Shirin, said to have been inspired by Nizami's love for his own wife, was such a woman. The poet's wife came to him a slave, but refused to enter his house until he made an honest woman of her. They lived happily ever after, as it were, for a short seven years. These beautiful women were learned and poetic. They were depicted 'as aggressively involved in changing the world and constantly on the move—riding horses like Princess Shirin or camels, like Zulekha in the biblical story of Joseph'.[14] Physical beauty did not mean much to a caliph or sultan when it came to choosing a wife or a concubine. She had to have a beautiful mind. Nizam, whom Ibne Arabi loved, was the daughter of Imam

Figures 6&7. ISKANDERNAMA

These two pages are from Iskandernama *that comprises two parts,* Marafnama *and* Iqbalnama. *Interestingly, the poet, instead of focusing on Iskander (Alexander the Great) as a historical personality, chooses to concentrate on universal notions like human dignity and ideal governorship.*

Figure 6. APPEAL TO SAVE AN IDOL

Illustrator: Mukund
Originally published/produced in India, 1595.
Language: Persian
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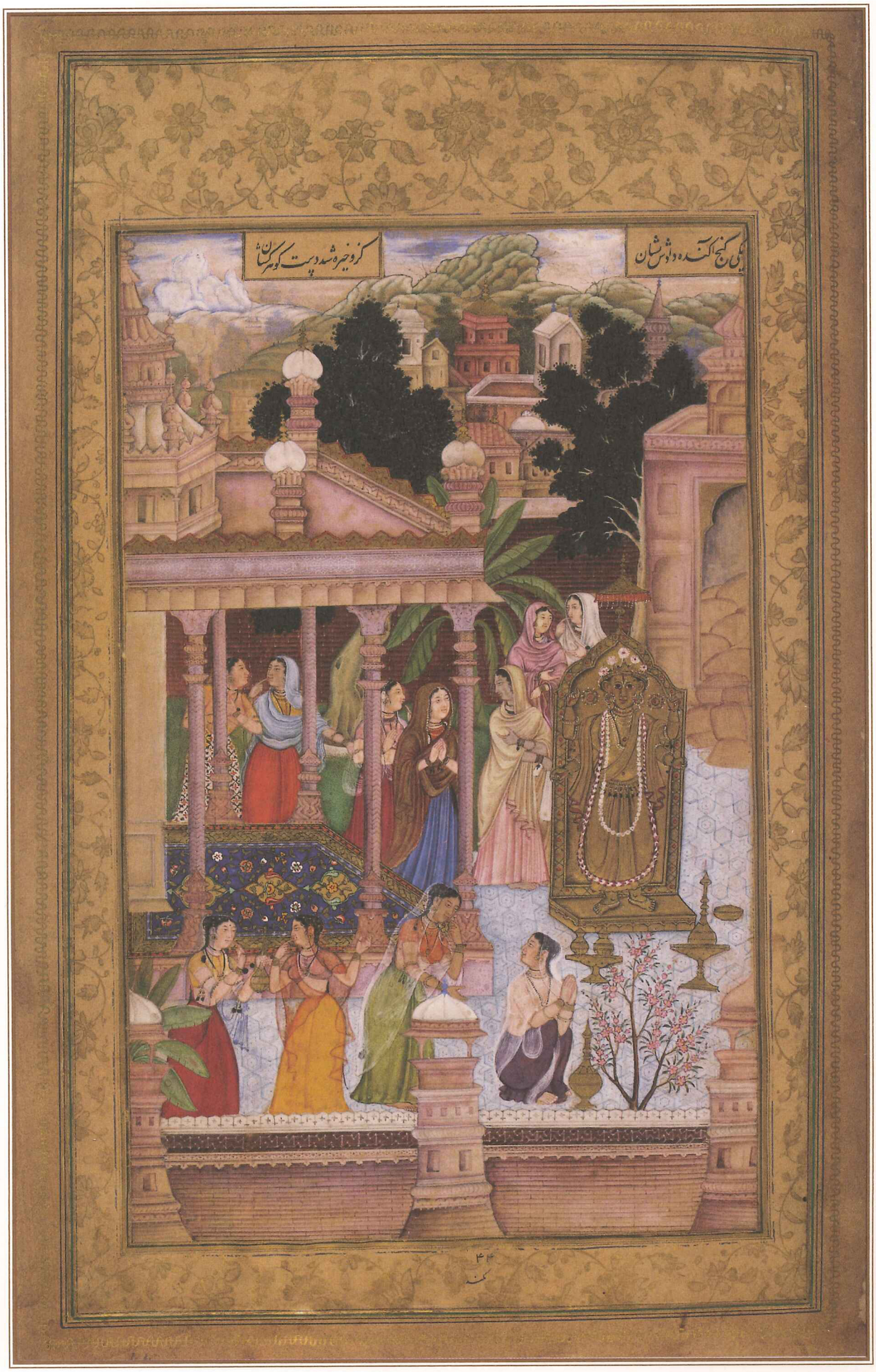
The miniature shows a statue made in gold, and with pearl-encrusted eyes; a beautiful priestess is shown relating a tale, successfully persuading Iskander not to destroy the statue. The paradise-like setting is Kandahar, in present-day Afghanistan, where people worshipped idols at the time. The script on the miniature relates the tale which began the day two birds, with pearls in their beaks, flew into the deserted temple. They departed a few days later leaving the precious stones behind. Thereafter, the elders of the community decided to construct a beautiful statue (using the pearls for eyes), which had come to be a symbol of light and fertility for the people of Kandahar.

6.



Abu Shaja' Zahir Ibne Rustum of Makkah. A paragon of beauty, she was a scholar and intellectual par excellence.[15] Mernissi also speaks of Scheherzade, who lived the perils of every night of her thousand and one nights and finally changed her beloved caliph and his world. Nur Jahan, who hunted tigers, wrote poetry, invented perfumes, set standards of lifestyle and ruled over India on behalf of her imperial husband, was yet another historic woman. In fact, heroines of the love tales in our parts of the world were incomparably stronger in every respect of mind, body and behaviour than their lovers. These 'defiantly intelligent women adorned and guided the tales of the heart without impairing their beauty', writes Mernissi.

The *Khamsa*, like all books of miniature, is a parable of human joy and pain—the package of spiritual enlightenment of our traditional Muslim culture and civilization. It brings us as close as possible to the archetypal nostalgia of Adam who sinned but was blessed with another paradise on earth for his sin. We are the wiser for recognizing the mystery of his trauma and true love from Muslim art/craft.

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Figure 7. ISKANDER AND THE QIPCHAQ

Illustrator: Mukund
Originally published/produced in India, 1595.
Language: Persian
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This image relates the event when Iskander's travels led him to the desert of Qipchaq in Turkey, where the king and his soldiers came across the unveiled beauties who are described as bright as 'the sun and the moon' and capable of seducing even angels. The custom of this land did not dictate women to veil themselves as they were not fearful of their men.

Iskander became concerned as his men became restless when they observed these women, who represented 'water' to their thirsty souls. He approached the elders, suggesting that they request the women to veil their faces; they, however, remark that the veil should be on the eyes of the soldiers not on the faces of the women.

Iskander, dissatisfied with the answer, consulted a magician named Bilyaas who suggested the performance of a magical ritual in the centre of the desert. The result of this spell was a veiled bride carved in black marble. The women of Qipchaq, drawn to this image, involuntarily began to follow this gesture of veiling.

7.

بفرزانه آن قصه را گفت باز
وزو چاره خواست آن چاره ساز
گرین چرب رویان نخیر موی
در نعمت گر کس نپوشد روی
چه سازیم تا نرم خوئی کنند
زبیگانه پوشیده رویی کنند
چنین داد پاسخ فراست شناس
که فرمان شه را بدیریم پاس
طلسمی بگیریم از ناف دشت
که افسانه سازند از آن سرگذشت
سران زن که در روی او بنگرد
بخرروی پوشیده رنگ زرد
بشرطی که شاه آرد اینجا نشست
وزو هر چه در خواهم آید بدست
شه از نیک و بد آنچه فرزانه خاست
بزور و بزر یک سپک کرد راست
جهان دیده دانا به نیک اختری
درآمد بتدبیر صنعت گری
نوآیین عروسی درین جلوه گاه
برآمیخت از خاره پیکر سیاه
بروچادری از رخام سفید
چو برگ سمن بر سر مشک بید
فراورد و از شرم چادر بری
نهان کرده رخسار و پوشیده روی
سران زن که دیدی بر آن رزم او
شده روی پوشیده از شرم او

1.

GURU NANAK SHAH FAQIR
Sufi and Shi'a Elements in the Representation of Guru Nanak

FRANCISCO JOSÉ LUIS

Sikhism is a mystical tradition that began in fifteenth century northern India with the teachings of Guru Nanak and nine successive *Gurus* (teachers). Sikh is a Sanskrit word, its root being *shishya*, which means 'disciple'. Sikhs believe in one Immortal Being, the ten Gurus, the Adi Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Scripture).

Guru Nanak, the first teacher, was born in 1469 CE in the Punjab (in present-day Pakistan), some forty miles from Lahore. His teachings emphasized oneness of God and the equality between all castes and creeds, men and women. Sikhism has roots in the Indic and Islamic (Sufi and Shi'a traditions).

Sufism *or tasawwuf* is Islamic mysticism. The word *Sufi* originates from the Arabic word *suf* meaning 'wool' referring to the simple cloaks worn by early Muslim ascetics. Another root word *safa* meaning 'purity' suggests purity of the heart and soul in Sufism. A Sufi is commonly understood to be a person of religious learning who aspires to be close to Allah. Sufis belong to *tariqas* (orders) established in the first few centuries after the Prophet's (PBUH) death; these orders have a master responsible for teaching sacred knowledge. Sufis were influential in spreading Islam particularly to Africa, India and the Far East.

Shi'a is a Muslim sect, claiming that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in early seventh century, his son-in-law and the first man to accept Islam, Hazrat Ali (RA) should have succeeded as the first caliph. The word Shi'a means 'followers' and by extension as 'followers of Ali'. Shi'as adhere to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and the religious guidance of his family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*) or his descendents known as Shi'a *Imams*.

Figure 1. (Left) Portrait of Guru Nanak (1469–1539 CE) and his disciple Bhai Mardana, playing the rubab, *from the Sarvasiddhantatattvacudamani 'The Jewel of the Essence of All Sciences' India (1840 CE), a treatise in Sanskrit on the Zodiac with numerous painted illustrations.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Sikh tradition, born at the confluence of two oceans *(majma-ul bahrain)* of the Islamic and Indic world, has never rejected its roots with both these great religious traditions. The same Gurus who founded Amritsar and built the Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) were also the ones who built mosques[i] and temples for the diverse Indic traditions. It is not surprising, therefore, to see elements of these faiths incorporated in Sikhism; this can be observed in the way Guru Nanak is represented in Sikh iconography.

This article based on hagiographic material will focus on a particular type of representation of Guru Nanak, in which Sufi and Shi'a elements have been incorporated. The picture is a miniature from Durgashankar's Sarvasiddhantatattvacudamani now conserved at the British Library. It depicts Guru Nanak sitting with his close disciple Bhai Mardana who is playing the *rubab*, a plucked string instrument *(Figure 1, see detailed analysis on p. 281)*.

DESCRIPTIONS OF GURU NANAK IN EARLY SIKH LITERATURE

The physical descriptions of Guru Nanak in early Sikh literature differ radically from today's neo-Sikh iconography found in most Sikh homes and places of worship. Neo-Sikhism that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century was heavily influenced by Western paradigms—such as Protestantism and Modernity—and strove to reformulate a Sikh identity that was hyper-masculine and devoid of Islamic and Indic elements.[1] Consequently, the relationship to art and iconography was greatly transformed; wall paintings on several Sikh temples were whitewashed by neo-Sikh authorities as their content was not in line with the new identity. The neo-Sikh Guru Nanak is an old stoic man wearing a saffron turban and simple saffron robes in the hieratic blessing position corresponding to the neo-Sikh ideal of a saint *(Figure 2)*.[2]

i. The most known example is that of *Guru Ki Masjid*, a mosque built by Guru Harigobind (Sixth Guru). See http://www.tribuneindia.com/2001/20010224/windows/main1.html

Guru Nanak thus is most often represented as an old man in early nineteenth century miniatures, though it is not rare to come across earlier paintings of him as a young man[3] with great emphasis on his beauty. A famous passage in various hagiographies narrates his capture by Pathans who desired to sell him as a slave; but the Pathan women, mesmerised by his beauty, insisted on keeping him. This, in many ways, can be seen as echoing the theme of Yusuf (AS), the beautiful young prophet in whom the divine attribute of beauty was manifested.[i]

Guru Nanak's attire changed many times during his life, especially due to the travels he undertook. What does not change is the fact that Guru Nanak wears a *topi* or Sufi hat throughout these different phases. As a householder he wears the usual dress of the layman of his time and rank, namely a *jama*. During his four great travels or *udasi* he wears different clothes. In the first two journeys (to southern and eastern India) he wears a colourful mixture of Indic and Islamic elements. During his northern expedition to the Himalayas and Tibet he is said to have worn furs and skins and on his fourth and last trip to the Middle East his dress has more Islamic elements and is described as *qalandari*.[ii]

Guru Nanak's journey to the Middle East is rich in mystical episodes revealing the emphasis the Sikh tradition places on inner spirituality and its relations with Islam. One will notice that the hagiographies show opposition between Guru Nanak and the *foqaha*[iii] of exoteric Islam and friendship towards Shi'a–Sufi mystics. Three important episodes of this voyage will be related.

The first incident occurs on Guru Nanak's way to Safavid Persia. He is asked by a group of Shi'a pilgrims to Mashhad about the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Imam Ali (AS) contrasting their position with that of the Sunnis.[iv] Guru Nanak replied to them with the following:

Know that Muhammad and Ali are one. Muhammad exceeded in knowledge. Ali exceeded in chivalry. The light of God is both in Muhammad and Ali. It is also in the four friends and in your heart but you have forgotten about it. (Singh 1999:236–7).

The first part of this reply is word for word a saying of Imam Jaffar as-Sadiq (AS), while the *Char Yar* (Four Friends) mentioned are four famous Sufi saints of Punjab and Sindh: Baba Farid Shakar Ganj of Pakpattan (1174–1266 CE); Jalaluddin Bukhari of Uch, Bahawalpur (1196–1294 CE); Bahauddin Zakariah of Multan (1170–1267 CE) and Lal Shahbaz Qalandar of Sehwan (1177–1274 CE). One will notice that these saints are all linked to Sufi orders whose *silsilay* (lineages) go back to Imam Ali and Imam Reza (AS) whose shrines are situated in Mashhad. The second part of the reply reveals the Sikh tradition's relation with the Shi'a–Sufi orders.

i. A Sikh version of the story of Yusuf and Zulekha can be found in Guru Gobind Singh's composition called *Charitropakhyan*, a part of his *Dasam Guru Granth Sahib*. A similar story involving a married woman trying unsuccessfully to seduce Guru Gobind Singh is also found in the same composition and is structurally its exact parallel. The idea behind this is that the Guru is the Yusuf of the age.

ii. *Qalandar* is a title given to Sufi mystics, especially in South Asia.

iii. *Foqaha* (plural of *faqih*) is an expert in *fiqh* i.e. Islamic jurisprudence.

iv. A Muslim sect who elected Prophet Abu Bakr (RA), a close companion of the Prophet (PBUH) as caliph, to succeed him after his death. It is important to note that both Shi'a and Sunni (as well as all other sects) agree that Muhammad was the final prophet.

2.

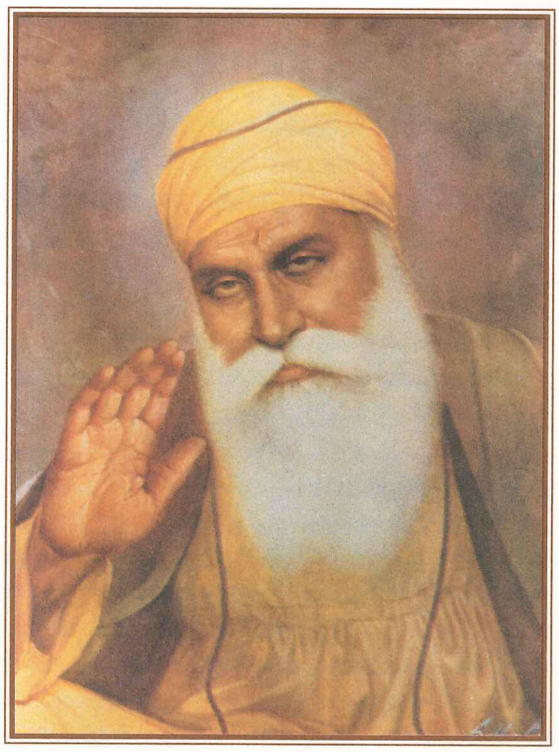

Figure 2. Guru Nanak as a stoic old man, wearing a saffron turban and robes in the hieratic blessing position painted by acclaimed Indian artist S. Sobha Singh (1901–1986 CE), awarded the Padamshree and D.Lit.

Singh's forte was portrait painting with a special focus on Sikh Gurus, their life and work; the paintings were a manifestation of his devotion to the Gurus and his desire to provide inspiration to people.

The second important event is Guru Nanak's stay in Baghdad where he recited the *adhan* or call to prayer which at that time, in Safavid Persia, would have included the mention of Imam Ali (AS). After people gathered around Guru Nanak, he started singing the great themes of mysticism in Persian, accompanied by Bhai Mardana on the *rubab*. After singing about the stages of *shari'a*, *tariqa* and *ma'rifa*,[i] Guru Nanak mentioned the multiplicity of universes. The *foqaha* considered this sacrilegious and threatened to have him stoned to death but he proved them wrong by quoting a passage from the *Mi'raj* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), indicating the existence of other universes. Guru Nanak then had a mystical meeting with Shaikh Bahlol,[ii] the famous disciple of Imam Jaffar as-Sadiq and Imam Musa al Kazim (AS), who recognised Guru Nanak as a great saint.

The third and most renowned episode of Guru Nanak's Middle Eastern journey is his stay in Makkah. Some traditions say he lay down to sleep in a mosque where

i. *Shari'a* means 'way' or 'path' and is a legal system based on Muslim principles of jurisprudence; *tariqa* in Sufism refers to the spiritual practice through which the aspirant seeks *haqiqa*, ultimate truth; *ma'rifa* is a term used by Sufi Muslims to describe mystical intuitive knowledge.

ii. This meeting could be considered meta-historical in nature, as the prominent Shi'a saint Shaikh Bahlol lived a few centuries before Guru Nanak. This meeting further confirms the links between the Sikh and Shi'a traditions. In Shaikh Bahlol's shrine in Baghdad a section is dedicated to Guru Nanak who is revered by the Shi'as who know him as a great saint.

other pilgrims were resting and whilst sleeping his feet pointed towards the *mihrab* (a niche in the wall of a mosque, indicating the *qibla*, i.e. the direction of the Ka'aba in Makkah, which Muslims face when praying). Another and more famous version narrates how Guru Nanak lay down to sleep in front of the Ka'aba with his feet in the direction of the sacred shrine. In both versions the *mullahs* (clerics) reprimanded Guru Nanak for such an act of blasphemy and instructed him to shift his feet, but each time the *mihrab* or the Ka'aba itself appeared to move.

Guru Nanak's blue *qalandari* appearance holds deep significance because of the episodes mentioned above.

Khalsa which means 'Pure' is the chivalric order created by the tenth and last Sikh master Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 CE. Members show their allegiance by five signs (called the five Ks): *kangha* (comb), *kara* (bangle), *kesh* (uncut hair, covered bya turban, and beard), *kirpan* (short sword) and *kuccha* (short trousers, originally for riding).

They are also solicited to attach the name *Singh* (lion) to their name and lead a life of spiritual chivalry.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAIT OF GURU NANAK FROM DURGA-SHANKAR'S SARVASIDDHANTATATTVACUDAMANI

The miniature depicts Guru Nanak sitting on a carpet, reclining on a cushion using his left hand to support himself and holding his rosary in the right. He wears a Sufi hat with a white turban around it and a blue tunic with a set of black cords called *seli* draped from his left shoulder. On his shoulders he wears a multicoloured *khirqa* or Sufi cloak; a meditation staff and a water pot are lying next to him. His disciple Mardana, dressed in layman's clothes sits in front of him, playing the *rubab*. Bhai Gurdas, famous theologian and disciple of Guru Arja (Fifth Guru), refers to Guru Nanak's *qalandari* appearance in his Varan:

Donning blue attire then Baba Nanak went to Makkah. He held staff in his hand, pressed a book under his armpit, caught hold of a metal pot and mattress.
(Var I Pauri 32).

This miniature is thus an illustration of Guru Nanak on his journey to the Middle East. The Islamic elements of Guru Nanak's attire derive from the Shi'a–Sufi world: his Sufi hat surrounded by a white turban is an attribute found in many Sufi orders.[4] The *dervish* hat is given at the time of initiation by the master to his disciple and symbolises the *taj* or crown, indicating that the one who treads the mystical path is the true king of this world. In most representations which can be traced back to *rishta-e dervishan*[5] of the Shi'a–Sufi orders, Guru Nanak is shown wearing a set of black cords or *seli* around this hat or his neck. As the name suggests, the black cord represents spiritual *faqiri* (poverty). The combination of the *topi* and *seli* apart from its link to the Shi'a–Sufi tradition translates a very important aspect of the Sikh tradition, namely the concept of *miri* and *piri* (temporal and spiritual power). The Guru in the Sikh tradition possesses both the crown of *miri* represented by the hat and the black cord of *piri*. Modern interpretations have led many, in the light of the 1979 revolution in Iran, to look at the combination of the two as a statement that religion and politics are not separate in Sikhism and that an independent Sikh state is necessary. A closer look into the history of the relations between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughals will show however, that on the temporal level the Sikh community was more like a state within a state or a parallel power based on a spiritual ethos.

The Sikh Gurus are given titles combining these two attributes of *miri* and *piri* such as *Shah Faqir* (monarch and impoverished, respectively) or *Badshah Dervish* (literally *Emperor Ascetic*). The Guru as the revealed aspect of the

Divine manifests the attributes of *jalal* (majesty) and *jamal* (beauty) which themselves are apparent in terms of authority—its temporal and spiritual aspects. The Guru's status is also signified by the *tilak* on his forehead, a sign of royal consecration. In Indian tradition the *tilak* mark was initially part of courtly etiquette before it became a part of temple and domestic worship rituals or *puja*; kings and nobles received it as a sign of consecration and enthronement. Guru Nanak as both *shah* and *faqir* wears the *tilak* as a symbol of the authority that he has received from God.[i] One will notice the absence of the begging bowl, an attribute common to Indic monastics, as well as, many Sufi orders. This comes as no surprise since the Sikh Gurus never supported monastic renunciation. A Sikh is encouraged to achieve spiritual enlightenment whilst remaining in the world, experiencing the joys and pains of work and marriage.

The colour blue, considered inauspicious in Indic religious traditions,[ii] actually plays an important role in the *Khalsa* traditions. Among the Nihang Singh, in particular, it is considered the colour par excellence, being the colour of the sky that represents infinity and timelessness. Before the emergence of the *Khalsa*, the blue tunic was used as a religious garment by Iranian Shi'a–Sufi orders. To this one needs to add the Sufi cloak or *khirqa*[6] which goes back to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself and his patched white woollen cloak. *Khirqas* can be passed down from master to disciple whilst others create their own by collecting pieces of cloth from the clothes of other holy people. As a sacred object it is not only linked to the Prophet (PBUH) but also represents the notion of humility and spiritual poverty.

Close attention needs to be paid to the importance of Bhai Mardana in the paintings depicting Guru Nanak. This loyal Muslim friend and disciple of Guru Nanak is the only contributor, apart from the Sikh Gurus, who uses the title Nanak in his compositions in the Adi Guru Granth Sahib. His descendants continued to play sacred music at the Harimandir Sahib until 1947 when they were forced to leave for Pakistan after being targeted by the Islamophobic neo-Sikh reformists such as 'Giani' Ditt Singh. Bhai Mardana,

i. At the beginning of his mission, Guru Nanak, when bathing in the Vein River near Sultanpur, disappeared for three days during which, according to tradition, he was received in the Divine Court and given his mission. As a sign of this authority he received the *tilak*. All the Sikh Gurus received the *tilak* on the forehead when they were enthroned.

ii. Brahmins are usually prohibited from wearing blue when conducting rituals and Indian monastic orders never use it.

the *rubab* player, is a constant reminder that *gurbani* is not just religious text but also sacred music, and plays an important role as a reminder of Sikhism's Islamic heritage.

The word *mardana* in Persian means manly and brave and is linked to the ethos of chivalry (*javanmardi* in Persian).[7] *Javanmardi* is the essential ethos that characterises Shi'ism and Sufism but has its roots in the ancient Zoroastrian tradition. This ancient Persian heritage is represented in the Islamic tradition by Salman Farsi,[8] the Persian companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who remained with Ammar ibn Yasir—one of the few loyal companions of Imam Ali (AS)—who plays an important role in Shi'a gnosis. He thus not only represents the transition between the Zoroastrian and Shi'a–Sufi traditions but also the evolution from the *zahir* (exoteric) to the *batin* (esoteric) aspect of religion. The former aspect is that of the *shari'a*, religion of submission whilst the latter is represented by *javanmardi*—the way of love for the revealed aspect of Divinity, the Eternal Imam. One needs to add to that the important element which characterises the ethos of spiritual chivalry, namely exile. The *javanmard*, the spiritual knight who is wholly dedicated to his Lord, needs to be uprooted and exiled in order to live his love. The old self has to die in order for the *javanmard* to emerge and start his journey back to his Lord. The Shi'a tradition emphasises that real Islam is a religion of exile. Bhai Mardana (who chose exile by following Guru Nanak), by his very name represents the Islamic notion of *javanmardi* and who, by playing the *rubab*, represents the esoteric aspect of religion.

CONCLUSION

This analysis of this portrait of Guru Nanak highlights not only the tremendous importance of the Shi'a–Sufi heritage of the Sikh tradition but also its continuity with early Sikh tradition.[9] Hidden by the Islamophobic prejudice of many neo-Sikhs, this heritage is nevertheless of such importance that ignoring it prevents one from having a full and correct understanding of early Sikh tradition. This has led many to ignore the importance of spiritual chivalry in the Sikh tradition and create the famous image of the pacific community forced to take arms under Guru Gobind Singh. This stereotype based on Western paradigms of the division of the private and the public does not at all take into account this essential dimension of the Sikh tradition that has taken different forms through its history. The presence of Bhai Mardana with Guru Nanak supports the idea that mystical love is only fruitful when combined with the ethos of bravery, the willingness to go through exile, to let the old self die. Overcoming this fear of losing one's self is the prerequisite of divine love and in fact of any type of true love. The cup of wine of divine love is not for those used to grape juice—for love is not for cowards.

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1A.

1B.

OBVERSE, REVERSE
History of Coinage in the Indus Region

ASMA IBRAHIM

Coinage, one of the most durable of man's work, has enabled many a ruler and civilization to escape obliteration from history. It reflects not only an image of the rulers, and the economic conditions prevalent at the time, but also, importantly, the diverse cultures assimilated over centuries of trade and invasions.

This essay provides a visual chronology of the evolution of coinage in the subcontinent which has three main roots—Greek, Indian and Chinese. It is not meant to be an exhaustive study but will focus primarily on the coins in the collections of the National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi and the State Bank of Pakistan.

PUNCH MARK

Small ingots of silver were the earliest form of coinage used in South Asia, and were in circulation in 600 BCE. The first engraved pattern was three circular dots; this was followed by stamps on both sides with a number of separate punches on heavy, bent bars of roughly cut, rectangular pieces of silver. These bents bars were called *panas* or *Karshapanas* and weighed nearly twelve grams; they bore two to five symbols which were generally geometric or floral in nature *(Figures 2&3)*. The punch-marked coins do not bear names of kings or dates. One-eighth of a *pana* comprised a shell, the *karada* or *kauri* (Cypraea moneta). Unscribed/inscribed cast copper coins were also used and were among the commonest coinage (of lowest denomination).

INDUS GREEK

The coins provide a principal course in establishing the history of the Indus Greek[i] kingdoms. Alexander had associated the Indian peninsula as restricted to the basins of the river, an idea proposed by Robert Browning. Indus is an ancient and classical term referring to the territories located on the banks of River

LEGENDS BY NAHEED ZAHRA

Curator, National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi

Figures 1a–1b. DIODOTOS *King of Bactria Gold, round*; c.245 BCE

a. Obverse: Head of the king to the right, diademed.
b. Reverse: Zeus striding to the left and hurling a thunderbolt; Aegis on the left arm, and a wreath in the field underneath it; at his feet an eagle (left).[1]

Note: The coins are not as per original scale.

i. A consensus reached by the numismatists of Pakistan recommends that the term Indo-Greek be changed to Indus Greek. Almost two centuries before Alexander's arrival, Greeks had been passing to and fro, along the trade routes that linked India with the Persian Empire and the Ionian cities of Asia Minor.

Indus where the coins studied in this essay were found. This geographical area is now located within the boundaries of Pakistan.

Alexander the Great invaded the Indus Valley in 327 BCE. He saw himself as a god-like figure and therefore, for the first time in history, a ruler placed his own portrait on the coins produced in his era *(Figures 4a&b)*.

The Greek rulers who followed Alexander, placed the portrait of the king on the obverse *(Figures 5a&6a)*, and being polytheistic, used the reverse for a deity *(Figures 5b&6b)*. Earlier rulers had employed Greek inscription on the reverse of the coins they issued.

Diodotos *(Figures 1a&b)* established an independent rule in this area while Demetrius was the first King of Bactria and India who introduced the system of legends written in both Greek and the Kharoshti[i] scripts *(Figures 6a&b, 7a&b)*. This bilingual and biscriptual tradition was preserved by the Scythians, the Parthians and later rulers as well.

The coins issued under Apollodotus (160–120 BCE) can be categorized into two classes. Firstly, continuing the earlier renditions, he utilized his own portrait in some of the coins issued during his reign, bearing the title 'Philopator'. He selected the deity Pallas for the reverse. This is the main reason why he is associated with the House of the famous Indus Greek King Menander, who also used her image on the reverse. Also known as Athena, goddess Pallas was one of the twelve Olympians born out of the head of Zeus and represents wisdom and skilful warfare. These coins have been found only in the Punjab and in north-west India.

Secondly, a principal element of design in the Apollodotus coin series was the use of the images of the elephant and the bull *(Figures 7a&b)*.

Historically the decline or abandonment of Greek rule is illustrated firstly in the coins by the disappearance of the Greek element in the imagery, and secondly the replacement of Greek weights and standards by the Indian system.

INDO-SCYTHIANS

In the first century BCE, the Sakas, a Chinese nomadic tribe, invaded the north-west of India, ousting the Greeks and establishing a Central Asian rule described as Indo-Scythian. Their art, and specially their coins, retained the Grecian style—the image of the king on the obverse and that of a deity on the reverse *(Figures 8a&b)*. However, towards the end of the Indo-Scythian rule, the coins, while retaining the Greek inscription on the obverse, inserted Hindu symbols on the reverse.

INDO-PARTHIANS

The rule of the Scythians was followed by the Parthians who gained supremacy after a long struggle, and in 20 CE, under Gondophares, created

i. Language used in Gandhara, north-west Indian subcontinent from the middle of the third century BCE until its extinction around the third century CE. A cursive script written from right to left utilized for commercial and calligraphic purposes.

Figure 2. PUNCH MARK
Silver, round; c.6th–3rd century BCE
a. *Obverse:* Symbols representing the sun, mountain and animals.
b. *Reverse:* Blank *(not shown)*.[2]

Figure 3. PUNCH MARK
Silver, round; 6th–3rd century BCE
a. *Obverse:* Symbols representing animals.
b. *Reverse:* Blank (not shown).[3]

Figures 4a–b. ALEXANDER *King of Bactria*
Bronze, round; c.3rd century BCE
a. *Obverse:* Head of the king to right.
b. *Reverse:* Cornucopiae and Greek legend.[4]

Figures 5a–b. EUCRATIDES
King of Bactria and north-west India
Silver, round; c.175 BCE
a. *Obverse:* Diademed bust of king to right, wearing a crested helmet adorned with the ear and horn of a bull.
b. *Reverse:* Two upright palms and the *piloi* (an egg-shaped felt cap, fitting close to the head) of the Dioskouroi.[5]

Figures 6a–b. STRATO *Bust of king and Pallas*
Silver, round; c.
a. *Obverse:* Diademed bust of king to the right and Greek legend.
b. *Reverse:* Pallas left with Aegis on an outstretched left arm, hurling a thunderbolt with the right hand. Kharoshti legend.[6]

Figures 7a–b. APOLLODOTOS
King of north-west India 155–130 BCE
Elephant and bull; silver, square.
a. *Obverse:* Elephant moving to the right; Greek legend running round the coin.
b. *Reverse:* Humped bull moving to the right; Kharoshti legend. No monogram.[7]

Figures 8a–b. AZES *Indo-Scythian*
Gold, round; c.58 BCE
a. *Obverse:* King on horseback to the right, holding couched lance.
b. *Reverse: Maharajasa rajarajasa mahatasa Ayasa*; Pallas to left with Aegis and thunderbolt.[8]

Figures 9a–b. GONDOPHARES *Indo–Parthian*
Billon, round; 19–45 CE.
a. *Obverse:* King to right on horseback, right arm extended. The Gondopharean symbol, a planetary monogram is seen below the head of the horse.
b. *Reverse:* Zeus standing to right with right arm extended; long sceptre in left hand. Kharoshti legend: *Maharaja rajatiraja tratara devavrada Gudupharasa*.[9]

2–3.

4a–b.

5a–b.

6a–b.

7a–b.

8a–b.

9a–b.

a new kingdom, Indo-Parthian, which included Arachosia (Kandahar), the Kabul Valley and the Indus Valley. Generally, the coinage retained the Scythian character, but also utilized a planetary monogram which has been termed the Gondopharean symbol by Cunningham *(Figures 9a&b)*.

KUSHANS

Since the second century BCE, the Yue-Chi nomadic tribe had been in continuous battle with the Indus Greeks. One of its tribes, Kushan, became a powerful confederacy by the first century CE. The Kushans played an important role in propagating Buddhism, but were tolerant of other religions as is evident from their coinage. Generally made of gold, the coins issued under Kushan princes Kanishka and Huvishka *(Figures 10a&b)* depicted Graeco-Roman, Iranian and Indian deities as well as the Buddha, and had both Greek and Kharoshti legends, giving rise to the development of a more local and traditional coinage.

GUPTAS

The Kushans were followed by the Guptas who emerged as a major power in north India and ruled from 320 to 535 CE. They issued a variety of coins specially in gold which are among the finest examples in the numismatics. The obverse is usually dedicated to the king while on the reverse maybe the goddess Lakshmi or the figure of the queen *(Figures 11a&b)*.

WHITE HUNS OR HEPHTHALITES

Towards the close of the fourth century a power struggle emerged between the White Huns or Hephthalites (who reigned over Central Asia) and the Guptas. A century later, the Guptas were driven out, and the Hephthalites established their rule in the northern and southern areas of India but were unable to consolidate their empire. The coins of this period bear no clear dates or names of the dynasty to which they belonged *(Figures 12a&b)*.

AMIRS OF SINDH

The introduction of Islam had an immense impact on the coinage produced in the Indian subcontinent after the invasion of Sindh by Muhammad bin Qasim. A line of Ummayyad-Abbasid governors ruled in the area between 712 and 870 CE, though they appear not to have issued coinage. However, during the period between 870 and 1009 CE (before the occupation of Sindh by the Ghaznavids), an independent Amirate of Sindh struck small pieces which bear simple Arabic legends on both sides of the coins *(Figures 13a&b)*.[22]

THE GHAZNAVIDS

Mahmud of Ghazni, from a Muslim dynasty, ruling south-west Asia (with their capital in Ghazni) annexed Punjab in 1021 CE, after several attempts to conquer north-west India. The coins from the era of the Ghaznavids *(Figures 14a&b)*, Ghorids and Sultans of Delhi utilized calligraphy and involved various forms of Perso-Arabic scripts.

Figures 10a–b. HUVISHKA *Kushans*
Gold, round; c.150 CE.

a. *Obverse:* Half-length figure of the king to the left; radiate and diademed, wearing a peaked helmet and coat of mail with a cloak. Holding an ankus in the left hand, and a kind of sceptre in the right.
b. *Reverse:* Within dotted circle sun-god to left, a torch in the left hand.[10]

Figures 11a–b. CHANDRAGUPTA *Guptas*
Gold, round; 375–413 CE.

a. *Obverse:* King seated to the left, with the left hand resting on the back of a couch, offering a bunch of lotus with right hand for worship, a spitoon below the couch.
b. *Reverse:* Within dotted circle, goddess seated on backless couch, holding a lotus bud in the right hand.[11]

Figures 12a–b. Hephthalites or White Huns
Silver, round; c.266 CE.

a. *Obverse:* Bust in style of Khusru II; bearded head to the left, with a pair of wings on his crown. A star and crescent are above the crown while each shoulder also has a star and crescent.
b. *Reverse:* Fire altar and two attendants.[12]

Figures 13a–b. AMIRS OF SINDH
Silver, round; AH 257–400/870–1009 CE.
a. *Obverse: Allah Wali Abdullah Nasira*
b. *Reverse: Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah Al Amir Abdullah.* Arabic legend.[13]

Figures 14a–b. MAUDUD *Ghaznavids*
Gold, round; AH 432–446.

a. *Obverse:* Area with double circle *Fatah Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah Shabab ud Daulah Fakhrul Ummamah Maudud*
Margins Qur'an IX, 33
b. *Reverse:* Area within circle *Adl la ilaha ilAllah Wahdahu la shareek Lahu Al Qaim ba Mir Allah.* Margins: Obscure.
Arabic legend.[14]

Figures 15a–b. MUHAMMAD BIN SAM *Ghorids*
Billon, round; AH 589–602/1193–1206 CE.

a. *Obverse:* Horseman to the right—Sri Hamir (The Amir)
b. *Reverse:* Bull seated to the left—Sri Mahamed Sim.[15]

Figures 16a–b. ILTUTMISH *The Slave Dynasty*
Billon, round; AH 607–633/1210–1235 CE.

a. *Obverse:* Iltutmish, Horseman only Chauhan Horsemen to right.
b. *Reverse: Al Moazzam Iltutmish Al Sultan.* Arabic legend, square characters.[16]

10a–b.

11a–b.

12a–b.

13a–b.

14a–b.

15a–b.

16a–b.

GHORIDS AND THE SULTANS OF DELHI

The Ghorids, a Muslim–Afghan dynasty, succeeded the Ghaznavids. Muhammad ibn Sam of Ghor *(Figures 15a&b)* defeated the Hindu Rajputs and conquered Delhi in 1193 CE. This led to the creation of the Delhi Sultanate which refers to the five successive dynasties that ruled India until the mid-sixteenth century: the Slave (1206–90), Khilji (1290–1320), Tughlaq (1320–1413), Sayyid (1414–51), and the Lodhi dynasty (1451–1526).

THE SLAVE DYNASTY (1206–1290 CE)

After the death of Muhammad ibn Sam, Qutb uddin Aibak, a Turkish slave who had risen to the rank of governor of Delhi, assumed sovereignty of the region and is considered the founder of the Slave Dynasty.

On his demise in 1210 CE, Shams uddin Iltutmish another former slave became the Sultan of Delhi. In his twenty-six year reign (1211–1236 CE), he consolidated the government in the subcontinent and instituted an exhaustive coinage reform. He introduced the gold and silver units known as *tankas,* and coins were also issued in billon—an alloy of gold or silver with a predominating admixture of a base metal—and in copper. Continuing in the tradition of the earlier coinage (such as the Indo-Parthians and Scythians) the image of the horseman is frequently utilized while the other side carries the name of the ruler in Arabic *(Figures 16a&b)*. The death of Iltutmish generated a war of succession, and of particular note is the reign of his daughter Razia Sultana between 1236–1240 CE *(Figures 17a&b)*. Another former slave, Ghiyas uddin Balban, ruled the Delhi Sultanate during 1265–1287 CE *(Figures 18a&b)*.

The coins of the Khiljis *(Figures 19a&b)*, Tughlaq *(Figures 20a&b)*, Saiyyid and Lodhi dynasties *(Figures 21a&b)* bear Arabic legends, stating the name and title of the rulers. The minting of Sultanate coins was restricted to Delhi and local kingdoms throughout the subcontinent issued their own forms of currency. During the Tughlaq reign, the Delhi Sultanate began to break up due to a number of reasons including expensive wars and prolonged famine; the exchequer was severely strained and the first debasement of the *tanka* occurred. Thereafter, the situation deteriorated to such an extent that the Lodhi Sultanate (1451–1526 CE) was no more than a confederacy of petty states under a weak Sultan. As the economy fell into ruin, the gold and silver *tankas* all but disappeared. When Babur assumed the throne of Delhi in 1526 CE, the coin in circulation, the billon *Sikandari*, contained just a few traces of silver.

In 1526, the Delhi Sultanate was absorbed by the emerging Mughal Empire.

MUGHALS

Mughal, the Persian word for Mongol, was generally used to refer to Central Asian nomads who claimed descent from the Mongol warriors of Genghis Khan. The Mughal Empire was established in the early sixteenth century by the Timurid Prince Zahir uddin Babur who defeated the last of the Delhi Sultans, Ibrahim Shah Lodhi, in 1526 at the First Battle of Panipat.

The Mughal coins were usually inscribed with the faith, the name and conventional titles of the ruler (like *Badshah* 'Suzerain King' and '*Ghazi*—

Figures 17a–b. JALAL UDDIN RAZIYA
Billon, round; AH 634–637/1236–1240 CE.

a. *Obverse:* In double square within circle—one dot in each segment
Fi Ahd-ul Imam, al Mustansir, al Momineen Zarb Huz... Shahu Sunn Khams Salseen Sutmayah
b. *Reverse: Al Sultan Al Azam, Jalalatu-u-Dunya Waldeen Malka Shams Bin-e Al Sultan Nasra Ameer-ul Momineen.*[17]

Figures 18a–b. BALBAN *The Slave Dynasty*
Copper, round; AH 664–686/1266–1287 CE.
Fals Monolingual issue

a. *Obverse: Al Sultan ul Azam*
b. *Reverse: Ghayas-ud Dunya Waldeen Balban.* Arabic legend.[18]

Figures 19a–b. ALA UDDIN MUHAMMAD SHAH KHILJI
Gold, round; AH 695–715/1296–1316 CE.

a. *Obverse: Al Sultan al Azam Alaud Dunya Waldeen Abul Muzaffar Muhammad Shah al Sultan*
b. *Reverse: Sikander us Sani Taiz ul Ghilafa Nasir Amir-ul Momineen.* Arabic legend.[19]

Figures 20a–b. GHIYAS UDDIN TUGHLAQ I
Gold, round; AH 720–725/1320–1325 CE.

a. *Obverse:* In double square—*Al Sultan Al Ghazi Ghayas-ud Duniya Waldeen Abul Muzaffar*
b. *Reverse:* In circle *Tughlaq Shah Al Sultan Nasir Amir-ul Momineen.*
Arabic legend.[20]

Figures 21a–b. LODHI
Billon, round; AH 894–923/1488–1517 CE.

a. *Obverse: Fi zaman ul Momineen Ameer Khildat.*
b. *Reverse: Al Mutawakkil Ali ul Rahman Sikander Shah Bahlol Shah Sultan.*
Arabic legend.[21]

Figures 22a–b. ZAHIR UDDIN MUHAMMAD BABUR *The Mughals*
Silver, round; AH 936/1529 CE.

a. *Obverse: above—Al Sultan ul Azam, below—Khald Allah Malk-u-Sultan*
b. *Reverse: In knotted circle la ilaha ilAllah Muhammad Rasul Allah* Margins: *Ghaffar Ali ul Murtaza.* Arabic legend.[22]

Figures 23a–b. NASIR UDDIN MUHAMMAD HUMAYUN *The Mughals*
Silver, round; AH 937–963/1530–1556 CE.

a. *Obverse: Al Sultan ul Azam Ghazi Muhammad Humayun Badshah Zarb*
b. *Reverse:* In circle *La Illaha Ill Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah, Allah Yarzaq Mun Yashhad Baghair Hisaab.* Arabic legend.[23]

17a–b.

18a–b.

19a–b.

20a–b.

21a–b.

22a–b.

23a–b.

OBVERSE, REVERSE

Fighter of the Infidels', the date (generally the *Hijra* years, written in Persian numerals) and the name of the mint.

'To the Mughals, coins were not merely a means of exchange, but also a powerful and efficient means of propaganda: a symbol of imperial grandeur carrying the seal of the emperor to every corner of the empire, a testament to the spread of his domain and unchallenged sovereignty. Mughal coins were characterized by superb calligraphy and a high quality of execution; each piece was an exceptional work of art'.[24]

The coins were struck in gold, silver and copper. The silver coins of Emperor Babur (1526–1530 CE) and that of his son Emperor Humayun (who reigned from 1530–1540 CE and again between 1555–1556 CE) adopted the same pattern as on coins struck in Afghanistan (*Figures 22a&b, 23a&b*). The copper coins used were as per the standard of the sultans of Delhi and were generally referred to as *fulus*, plural of the Arabic word, *fals* meaning a small copper coin (also the scale of a fish).

The coins of emperors Jalal uddin Akbar (1556–1605 CE) and Jahangir (1605–1627 CE) were of different shapes and sizes and weighed an average of 168 grains for the gold *Mohar*, and 178 grains (173–177 CE for the used specimen) for the silver *rupiyah* (or rupee, derived from the Sanskrit word *rupehli*, meaning silver).

In the thirtieth year of Akbar's reign, a major change occurred in his coinage and he introduced coins dated from 1556 CE, the year of his accession to the throne. Terming this period the *Ilahi* (Divine) Era, he issued coins in square and round shapes, bearing the legend *Allahu Akbar, jalla jallalahu* 'God is the greatest, splendid in His glory' and on the reverse the date *Ilahi* 30 (*Figures 24a&b*). He abandoned the lunar *Hijra* calendar in favour of the solar calendar which was more suited to an agricultural country.

Akbar was succeeded by his son Jahangir, who is credited with minting some of the finest coins in Muslim India despite the fact that very few coins were minted during this period as the *bazaars* were full of currency from the rule of Akbar and Humayun. Interestingly, Akbar and Jahangir were the only rulers who issued portrait coins which were rare specimens of high artistic value with decorative Persian script, combined with geometric and floral designs (*Figures 25a&b*). Jahangir discontinued Akbar's *Ilahi* Era but preserved the solar calendar. In this regard, his Zodiac issues were an exceptional innovation; the month in which the coin was minted was replaced by the figure corresponding to the constellation placed within the rays of the sun (*Figures 26a&b*). Worth mentioning are the coins from 1622 CE bearing the name of Empress Nur Jahan, the intelligent and beautiful wife of Jahangir (*Figures 27a&b*).

From the time of Shah Jahan (1628–1658 CE) and Aurangzeb (1658–1707 CE) the coinage remained unchanged as far as the weight and size of the issues was concerned. Shah Jahan reverted to the classical epigraphical legends of Babur and Humayun by reintroducing the *kalima* on his gold and silver issue—a reflection of his traditional attitude (*Figures 28a&b*). He also rendered the Zodiac and Nur Jahan issues of Jahangir's reign obsolete. Subsequently, Aurangzeb dropped the *kalima* from his issue to avoid disrespect (*Figures 29a&b*).

Figures 24a–b. JALALUDDIN AKBAR
The Mughals
Silver, square; AH 1000 or 1003/1591 CE or 1594

a. *Obverse:* In triple square centre line of dots *Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalahu* with a flowered ground.
b. *Reverse:* Contained as obverse, flowered ground. 35 or 38 *Ilahi Abaan* (Persian month).[25]

Figures 25a–b. NUR UDDIN JAHANGIR
The Mughals
Gold, round; AH 1023/1614 CE, Ajmer

a. *Obverse:* Emperor, his head crowned with a halo, seated on a throne to the left, with a goblet in his right hand. *Qaza bar sikka zar koor tasweer Shabya Hazrat Shah Jahangir.* Persian legend.
b. *Reverse:* In double circle, in centre, sun surrounded by its rays. *Huroof Jahangir Allahu Akbar. Zarb 1023 Zaroz Azl dar adad shad barabar.* Persian legend.[26]

Figures 26a–b. NUR UDDIN JAHANGIR
The Mughals
Gold, round; 1032 AH/1622 CE
Zodiac Rupee, Agra Series

a. *Obverse:* Within circle *Akbar Shah az Jahangir Yaft dar Agra Rupee raz dalur* 1032. Agra AH 1032
b. *Reverse:* 3179 Zodiac sign Capricorn.
Some zodiac rupees, particularly those of the Agra series, were re-struck from new dies engraved in different style, later in the Mughal period, probably as presentation pieces. Persian legend.[27]

Figures 27a–b. NUR UDDIN JAHANGIR
The Mughals
Silver, round; AH 1036/1626 CE
a. *Obverse:* Name of the Empress Nur Jahan
b. *Reverse:* Persian legend. AH 1036[28]

Figures 28a–b. SHAH JAHAN *The Mughals*
Gold, round; AH 1059/1649 CE.

a. *Obverse:* In square with knots at corners *Badshah Ghazi Shah Jahan*
Zarb (Mint) 22 Sunn Lahore, AH 1059.
b. *Reverse: Kalima* at left margin.[29]

Figures 29a–b. MUHIYUDEEN AURANGZEB ALAMGIR *The Mughals*
Gold, round; AH 1106/1694 CE.

a. *Obverse: Aurangzeb Alamgir sikka zad cho Mohar Munir Darjahan 1106.*
b. *Reverse: Zarb Darul Sultanat Juloos Memant Maloos 38 (year of accession to the throne)*[30]

Figures 30a–b. BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR
The Mughals (1838–1858 CE)
a. *Obverse:* In triple circle on flowered field. 125 *Muhammad Bahadur Shah Ghazi Siraj uddin Muzaffar Abwa.*
b. *Reverse:* In triple circle on flowered field. *Jahanabad, Dar-ul Khilafa Zarb Juloos Yamant Manoos 4.*[31]

24a–b.

25a–b.

26a–b.

27a–b.

28a–b.

29a–b.

30a–b.

OBVERSE, REVERSE

The disintegration of the Mughal Empire started soon after the death of Aurangzeb and culminated in the deposition of the last Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar *(Figures 30a&b)* by the British in 1857 CE.

THE BRITISH RAJ

The deterioration of political stability provided a chance to the East India Company to expand its trade and military activities. In 1765 CE, the revenue-collecting powers in Bengal were taken over by the British. At that time various types of rupees with different values were in circulation. New coins were introduced with a fixed date of Shah Alam (1730 CE), withdrawing the old coinage. In 1835 CE, a new standard British coin (rupee) with a fixed weight of 180 grains with a portrait of William IV was issued and circulated throughout the country, although some maharajas continued the use of their own coins. By 1858 CE, most of the coins struck acknowledged the British suzerainty. *(Figures 31a&b, 32a&b)*.

INDEPENDENCE

After the partition of India, in 1947 CE, no immediate change was made to the currency. The first coins of Pakistan, issued in 1948, were based on the traditional subcontinental system, consisting of the rupee, anna and paisas. The first seven-coin series was of the one pice, in bronze with a hole in the centre *(Figures 33a&b)* 1 anna *(Figures 34a&b)* and 2 annas *(Figures 35a&b)* and $^1/_4$, $^1/_2$ and 1 rupee *(Figures 36a&b)*. These coins were simultaneously minted at Lahore, Bombay and Calcutta and the metal used was nickle and copper nickle. The *Tughra*, calligraphic emblem of *Hukumat-e Pakistan* (Government of Pakistan), the crescent and star depicted on the coins, was symbolic of the Muslim state. The *tughra* on the rupee coins is reported to have been designed by P. W. Burende. The Indian coins in circulation were withdrawn in a phased manner, from 1949 to 1951 CE.

Pakistani coinage embraced the metric system in 1961. The decimal coins of 25 and 50 paisas (replacing the earlier 'pice') were issued in 1963 and with depreciation in the value of the rupee, paisa coins were last issued in 1995.

The current coins consist of one, two and five rupee coins. The one rupee coin has the mausoleum of Sufi saint Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan Sharif on the obverse with the profile of Mohammad Ali Jinnah on the reverse *(Figures 37a–b)*. The two rupee coin has the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore on one side with the star and crescent on the other, first issued in 1998 *(Figures 38a–b)*. The five rupee coin was struck on the same pattern in December 2002 *(Figures 39a–b)*.

Figures 31a–b. QUEEN VICTORIA
The British Raj 1840 CE

a. *Obverse:* Bust of Queen to the left, Legend Queen Victoria divided in English.
b. *Reverse:* Legend East India Company, One Rupee in English, *Eik Rupiah* in Urdu and 1840.

Figures 32a–b. QUEEN VICTORIA
The British Raj 1862 CE

a. *Obverse:* Bust of Queen Victoria Legend divided.
b. *Reverse:* W.W.S. raised and W.W.B. raised. One Rupee India, 1862.[32]

Figures 33a–b. PAKISTAN
Pice in bronze, copper with a hole in centre

a. *Obverse:* One Pice 1948 *Eik Paisa*
b. *Reverse: Hukumat-e Pakistan* and Government of Pakistan Bank.[33]

Figures 34a–b. PAKISTAN
Anna, waved, 12 scallops
Copper Nickel

a. *Obverse: Eik Anna* in Urdu (One Anna) with the crescent and star and a half-circle wreath
b. *Reverse:* Government of Pakistan *tughra* of *Hukumat-e-Pakistan* 1948.[34]

Figures 35a–b. PAKISTAN
2 Annas, square with rounded corners
Copper Nickel

a. *Obverse: Do Anna* in Urdu (Two Annas) with the crescent and star and a half-circle wreath
b. *Reverse:* Government of Pakistan *Tughra* of *Hukumat-e-Pakistan* 1948.[35]

Figures 36a–b. PAKISTAN
Rupee in nickel; round, milled edge

a. *Obverse: Eik Rupiah* in Urdu, One Rupee in English with the crescent and star and a half-circle wreath
b. *Reverse:* Government of Pakistan *Tughra* of *Hukumat-e-Pakistan* 1948.

31a–b.

32a–b.

33a–b.

34a–b.

35a–b.

36a–b.

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37a–b.

38a–b.

39a–b.

Figures 37a–b. PAKISTAN
Rupee in copper; round, milled edge

a. *Obverse: Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar Mausoleum, Sehwan Sharif.*
b. *Reverse:* Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Figures 38a–b. PAKISTAN
2 Rupee in nickle; round.
a. *Obverse:* Badshahi Mosque, Lahore.
b. *Reverse:* Crescent and star with Urdu legend *Islami Jamhooriya Pakistan* (Islamic Republic of Pakistan).

Figures 39a–b. PAKISTAN
5 rupees in copper nickle; round.

a. *Obverse:* Rupee 5 written within a pentagonal frame and flourishes.
b. *Reverse:* Crescent and star with Urdu legend *Islami Jamhooriya Pakistan* (Islamic Republic of Pakistan).

29. NM 1957.534/108.

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1.

STORYBOARDS IN STONE
The Buddhist Art of Gandhara

IVANA PRAZIC

Gandhara, an ancient region located in the north of Pakistan is the alleged art-historical birthplace of the first known sculpted anthropomorphic image of the Buddha.[2] Legend has it that Buddhism reached Gandhara soon after the Buddha's death[i].[3] Even though there is no archaeological evidence to support this possibility, unearthed materials have proved that Buddhism was present in the region, at the latest, from the time of the reign of the Mauryas (300–150 BCE);[4] and according to travel accounts of two renowned Buddhist pilgrims from China, the religion thrived there for several centuries[ii].[5]

The land of Gandhara was practically studded with *caitya* halls, *viharas* and *stupas*[iii] [6] when Fah-Hian, one of the Chinese pilgrims, visited it in the fifth century CE. Taxila,[iv] [7] a highly important Gandharan town was perceived as a site of particular religious significance:

Buddha, when he was bodhisattva,[v] *in this place [Taksasila] gave his head in charity. [...] Still going to the eastwards two day's journey, you come to the place where he gave his body to feed a starving tiger. In these two places they have raised great towers, adorned with all the precious substances. The kings, ministers, and people of all the surrounding countries vie with each other in making religious offerings at these places, in scattering flowers, and burning incense continually.*[8]

Turbulent historical events caused the slow destruction of many of these monuments, just as they brought about the gradual fading of Buddhism in Gandhara. By the time when yet another Chinese Buddhist, Hsuan-tsang, went on a pilgrimage in the seventh century CE, Gandhara had been left almost desolate, its sacred places and monasteries in ruins.[9] The huge output of art in the Buddhist Gandharan style (first to sixth centuries CE) is believed to have ended with the devastations by the

Figure 1. (Left) HAND HOLDING LOTUS

2nd–3rd century
Sahri Bahlol, Mardan, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)
Schist H 19 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, NM 1974

The Lotus 'to which water does not cling'[1] is an ancient religious symbol and a divine attribute; due to its connection with water and mud, it most commonly symbolized fertility and, consequently, affluence. In Buddhism, the lotus is related to Buddha and *bodhisattva*: it is the throne Buddha sits upon in the lotus-like position; it sprang from the ground where he took his first seven steps; it hovers above his head as a parasol, or marks the soles of his feet.

i. Precise dates not known, various sources mention years 544 BCE, 487/486 BCE, 368 BCE.
ii. Fah-Hian in the fifth and Sung-Yun in the sixth century CE.
iii. *Caitya*, a place of worship; *vihara*, buddhist monastery; *stupa*, monument built over a sacred place or relics of the Buddha.
iv. Ancient *Taksasila*, from Sanskrit *sila*, stone or rock, and *Taksa*, which according to the Ramayana was the name of the son of the founder of the town. Thus, its meaning is 'the rock of Taksa'.
v. From Sanskrit *bodhi*, or enlightenment/supreme awakening, and *sattva*, meaning pure and fine. He is a future Buddha, *a being who is in process of obtaining but has not yet obtained Buddhahood.*

Central Asian Hephthalites or White Huns in the early sixth century. Nevertheless, Buddhism managed to linger on in parts of today's Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kashmir in the seventh and eighth centuries, or even to a much later date, until it was finally uprooted from the northern parts of South and Central Asia by the permanent settlement of Islamic invaders.[10]

The main purpose of this essay is to map some historical, geographical, 'artistic' and wider cultural coordinates which gave rise to and determined the outlines of the art historical discourse known as the Gandharan 'school' of Buddhist 'art' also later known as 'Romano-Buddhist Art'.[11] The included images are several narrative friezes illustrating the biography of the Buddha which formed a part of Buddhist religious architecture (and are now part of a collection in two museums in Pakistan) and two rock carvings in a natural environment in Swat, in the north of Pakistan.

HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY: IMAGINING & EXCAVATING GANDHARA

The imaginary region of Gandhara is situated in what is today the western part of Pakistan, spreading further to the west through the Khyber Pass into Afghanistan, and to the south into the plains of the west bank of the Indus River (including the Peshawar Valley), reaching Taxila (near Islamabad) and the Murree Hills.[12]

Gandhara was an important strategic area, particularly as various trade routes lay within its borders and as it is mentioned in early historical references especially after its conquest by the Persians. In the sixth century BCE, Darius of Persia in his *Behistun* (Bisutun) inscription (c. 516 BCE) referred to the *Gadara* as one of his eastern satrapies. Before the year 500 BCE, Hecateus of Miletus mentions the *Gadhari*, and the famous Greek historian Herodotus (fifth century BCE) refers to the *Gandarioi* as the seventh satrapy of the Persian Empire.[13]

After the Persians, it was the Greeks who invaded Gandhara in the fourth century BCE although Greek settlements in Bactria (the area around the city of Balkh in present-day Afghanistan and parts of Tadzhikistan) existed even before their invasion.[14] The King of Taxila surrendered *the greatest of all cities between Indus and the Hidaspes* to Alexander the Great in the year 326 BCE.[15] In over a century of turmoil and wars, the region was briefly held by Chandragupta Maurya (third century BCE), the province of Bactria ceased to exist, being divided into the Bactrian kingdom and the Indo-Greek Kingdom ruled by two distinct Hellenic houses, mutually hostile and often at war. In the second half of the second century BCE, a Scythian tribe of *Shakas* defeated the Bactrian Kingdom and a few decades later, they also conquered the Indo-Greek Kingdom. The next grand military campaign was undertaken by the *Kusanas* (Yueh-chi) who left their homeland situated in today's Chinese province Kansu in the second century BCE. It is believed that this dynasty ruled the region from the first century BCE, until the fifth century CE, when the *Kusana* kingdom was destroyed by the invasion of the White Huns.[16]

Numerous archaeological excavations supplied material evidence to the 'School of Gandharan Art' mosaic. Two archaeologists, Alfred Foucher and Sir John Marshall, first discovered and construed the Buddhist Art of

2.

Figure 2. RELIEF WITH SEVEN CELESTIAL FLOWERS

2nd–3rd century
Phyllitite H 15 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, NM 1974

He has appeared,
He who illuminates the world,
the protector of the world who produces light,
who gives the world gone blind, the eye that discerns natural corruption.

You have become the victor of the struggle, you whose wish was realized through your merits. Having achieved perfection through pure doctrines, you will quell the yearning of beings.

Having traversed the quagmire and being truly without sin, Gautama stands on firm ground; he will lead the beings who are caught in the great current.

You are eminent, great Sage,
a man without equal in the worlds;
like the lotus to which water does not cling,
you are not imbued to the laws of the world.

It is you who, with the lantern of wisdom,
is capable of awakening this long-sleeping world, enveloped in a mass of dark gloom.
In a world that has long been in distress,
tormented by the ills of natural corruption,
you have appeared, king of healers,
who delivers from all ills.

The Lalitavistara, Chapter XXIII.[17]

Gandhara. In his pivotal work, Marshall discovered that such turbulent historical changes could be discerned in the 'racial mixture' of the people inhabiting the region even in his time: 'With such a history behind them it is not surprising that the people of Gandhara were thoroughly *cosmopolitan* in their culture and their outlook. Of their physical appearance we get some idea from the old sculptures. Some of the men, with strikingly *tall* and *dignified* figures, closely resembled many present-day Pathans, and wore the same distinctive kind of baggy trousers and sleeved coat. Others were *characteristically* Greek; others just as *characteristically* Indian. And, no doubt, if we *knew* more about them, we should *recognize* other *racial elements* portrayed by the sculptors'.[18] *(italics added)*

We also learn through a later structured intervention that, 'the Greek city of Sirkap at Taxila was laid out on the same chessboard pattern and fortified with the same kind of bastioned stone walls as were in vogue among Hellenistic town planners elsewhere'.[19] This was only the beginning of the Hellenization of the region, which was to triumph a couple of centuries later in supplying the local peoples with formalist apparatus capable of—among other things—creating the first human image of Buddha. Or so it was believed during most of the twentieth century.

HISTORY OF GANDHARAN ART

Discourse on the Gandharan art has mostly focused on the efforts of scholars to gauge the precise ratio of 'western' against 'Indian' elements.

Foucher coined the term 'Graeco-Buddhist' for the Gandhara art, recognized the 'westernness' of its visual language as being Greek in origin and form,[20] and his fellow archaeologist Marshall supported this Hellenocentric theory.

These views were challenged, however, by Ananda Coomaraswamy, a prominent scholar on Indian Art and adherent of the *swadeshi* movement. A long-lasting academic dispute was set off to resolve the historical question of which of the two 'artistic schools', Mathuran or Gandharan, designed the first anthropomorphic image of Buddha in sculpture.[21] Mathura (ancient Muttra) was *a prominent cultural and religious centre in the Kusana Empire, where the making of plastic images in 'indigenous tradition' could be traced back to times well before Mathura and Gandhara were under the rule of the Kusanas.*[22]

Another archaeologist, J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw believed that 'both Mathura and Gandhara had in(ter)dependently developed various types of the Buddha's figures, and that exchanges between the two cultural centres of the Kusana kingdom were mutually fruitful'.[23]

It is important to note, that the oldest dated monument attesting to *Mahayana* Buddhism is an image of the Buddha flanked by two bodhisattvas found in Gandhara from the late first century CE.[24]

LIFE OF BUDDHA

The anthropomorphic visualization of the Buddha in various media (sculpture, relief, and painting) was linked with the essential change in the Buddhist doctrine, taking place around the beginning of the Christian era, through the emergence of *Mahayana*,[25] literally 'Greater Vehicle', the new 'school' of Buddhist thought which transformed the Buddhist teaching into a structured religion.

In its earliest *Hinayana*,[26] 'Lesser Vehicle' phase of development, Buddhism was practically atheistic. Its adherents did not venerate the Buddha since he was not believed to be a god. He was considered to be the Master who had founded the monastic order (the *Sangha*), which would spread his doctrine (the *Dharma*) and disseminate the Four Noble Truths[i] [27] among those who yearned for salvation from the endless cycle of rebirths and suffering of life. *Hinayana* Buddhism was by no means devoid of visual narratives: preserved reliefs illustrate the lives of the twenty-four *bodhisattvas* who were reincarnations of the historical Buddha, however they were not represented in a human form but were rendered as symbols.[ii]

The penultimate Buddha was also known as Gautama or Sakyamuni[iii] [28] Buddha, and Prince Siddhartha.[iv] He too was a bodhisattva born into the clan of Sakyas as the first child of King Suddhodana and Queen Mayadevi of Kapilavastu, ancient capital of the mentioned kingdom, in present-day Bihar. His conception, a joyous surprise to his childless parents, was immaculate, as he entered his mother's side in a dream and in the form of a white elephant. The royal fortune-tellers foretold the birth of a boy who would either become a Universal Monarch or a Buddha. Seven days after giving birth, Mayadevi died. The child was raised by his mother's younger sister, Mahaprajapati, who became his father's second wife. At the age of sixteen, he was married to Yasodhara, a woman of highest qualities, whose hand Siddhartha won through a traditional competition. The couple was soon blessed with a son named Rahula. Fearing that Siddhartha might renounce his earthly life, the king made sure his son was surrounded by all sorts of pleasures. However, the young prince slipped out of the palace four times and encountered four men—one was old, the other sick, the third dead and the fourth an itinerant monk—and thus, he learned about

Figure 3. DIPANKARA JATAKA

2nd–3rd century
Schist H 36, W 74, D 7 cm
Peshawar Museum, Acc. No. 2718

Figure 4. BIRTH OF SIDDHARTHA

2nd–3rd century. Provenance unknown
Schist H 69, W 74 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, NMG 31

i. The Four Noble Truths are: 1. Everything is suffering; 2. the origin of suffering is desire; 3. there exists a *Nirvana*, an end to suffering; 4. a path defined by the Buddha leads to *Nirvana*.

ii. These included the empty throne, parasol, tree, footprints.

iii. Gautama, subcaste and the founder of Sakyas, the community to which he was born.

iv. Literally means 'the one who obtains prosperity and success'.

3.

4.

painful aspects of life which had been withheld from him. On the night of his twenty-ninth birthday, Siddhartha left the palace and his family to become a wandering monk. He followed several Hindu masters, who failed to fulfil his expectations; he then decided to engage in severe asceticism, practicing yoga and fasting for six years, yet he did not attain the spiritual enlightenment he craved. He realized in the process that the only true path was the middle one. Thus, at the site of Bodhgaya (in present-day Bihar, India) and at the age of thirty-five, *bodhisattva* reached *nirvana* and was transformed into the Buddha or the Enlightened One. Thereafter, his life was dedicated to preaching and miracle-performing, which lasted until his death or *(maha)paranirvana* (Great Blowing Out or the Final Extinction) at Kusinagara (in present-day Uttar Pradesh, India), at the age of eighty.

5.

Figure 5. SEVEN STEPS OF SIDDHARTHA

2nd–3rd century CE
Mardan, NWFP
Schist H 15, W 28 cm
Peshawar Museum, Acc. PM 02731

Figure 6. BIRTH, RENUNCIATION AND DEPARTURE

2nd–3rd century CE *probably from Peshawar, NWFP.*
Schist H 46, W 28 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, NM 1963.199

VISUAL STORYTELLING

The friezes in this essay are from the Peshawar Museum and the National Museum in Karachi. They visually represent the Buddha in anthropomorphic form during various phases of his life. The first frieze *(Figure 3)* is a *jataka*, i.e. a story of his previous existence. This is followed by several scenes as *bodhisattva*—his birth *(Figure 4)*, the first miracle of Seven Steps *(Figure 5)*, his life as a prince in his father's palace, his departure *(Figures 6&7)* and the pre-enlightenment deed of defeating Mara, the god of all desires *(Figure 8)*, and finally as a Buddha expounding his first sermon and the Miracle of Sravasti *(Figures 9, 10&11)*.

DIPANKARA JATAKA

This story is one of Siddhartha's previous existences, as Dipankara. This popular *jataka (Figure 3)*—divided into two distinct scenes by a Corinthian column—recounts his meeting with the brahman Sumedha (who predicted that Dipankara would become Gautama in a future reincarnation). The composition illustrates Sumedha in four sequences: on the far left, he is standing in front of a doorway and buying flowers from a woman; in the next, he is tossing the flowers in the air; then, he is prostrating before the future Buddha, offering his hair to step on so that his feet would not be sullied; and finally, he is hovering above him in the air. Reliefs like this one may have made early art historians believe that Dipanakara was portrayed wearing a Greek *chiton* or a Roman *toga*, for his *sanghati* is wrinkled in a 'western manner', subtly delineating his figure underneath it.

BIRTH OF SIDDHARTHA

The birth of the last living Buddha *(Figure 4)* took place in the Lumbini Garden near Kapilavastu (present-day Bihar). The frieze shows Queen Mayadevi extending her 'right arm resembling a lightening bolt' towards the tree that 'bends to greet her',[29] while her son came forward from her right side, leaving his mother unharmed in the process. The queen assumes the famous triple-flexed posture typical of equally renowned figures of *dryads*[i] from the pre-Buddhist times. Prominent in this frieze are the gods Indra and Brahma along with figures of heavenly musicians playing instruments and rejoicing over the birth of the future Buddha.

i. A nymph inhabiting a tree.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Figure 7. COURT LIFE, GREAT DEPARTURE AND RENUNCIATION OF THE WORLD
(Also titled LIFE IN PALACE AND RENUNCIATION*)*
2nd–5th century CE
Jamal Garhi, Gandhara, NWFP
Schist H 62, W 47 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, NM 507

Figure 8. ATTACK OF MARA
2nd–3rd century CE
Mardan, NWFP
Schist H 38, W 51 cm
Peshawar Museum, Acc. PM 02765

Figure 9. THE FIRST SERMON
2nd–3rd century CE
Sahri Bahlol, Mardan, NWFP
Schist
Peshawar Museum, Acc. PM 02781

Another composition, also depicts the birth, with a female figure, probably his mother's sister, receiving the child in her arms *(Figure 6, top scene in the tripartite frieze)*.

SEVEN STEPS

Seven Steps of the Infant Bodhisattva *(Figure 5)* is the first miracle the young prince performs shortly after his divine birth. Taking seven steps towards each cardinal point (with a lotus flower blooming at each step), he announces he would become the saviour of the world. Beside the halo, the child's superhuman nature is represented by his very long arms, one of thirty-two bodily marks, or *laksanas*, of a 'universal monarch' or a Buddha. His royal origin is marked by a large parasol above his head, as is the fly whisk which an attendant behind the child holds. Siddhartha is flanked by two divine figures: bearded Brahma *(right)* and Indra holding his thunderbolt *(left)*.

COURT LIFE, GREAT DEPARTURE AND RENUNCIATION OF THE WORLD

Aspects of Prince Siddhartha's life are depicted in four out of five scenes in friezes 6 and 7 *(Figures 6&7)*. They show the worldly pleasures laid out for the young prince by King Suddhodana, his father, to keep his mind off renouncing the world: *...the conches, the drums, the kettledrums, the brass drums, the harps, the lutes, the tambourines, the cymbals and the flutes brought forth sounds agreeable in their harmony, their sounds that were varied and resounding with symphonies while he was awake; and the troupe of women with voices that were supple, sweet and lively kept the Bodhisattva awake with their enchanting harmonies and concerts.*[30]

The tripartite frieze 6 shows the prince leaving his sleeping wife and son, and departing from the palace with the assistance of his loving groom Chandaka, depicted in the two lower scenes of the tripartite frieze as the figure holding a parasol above the prince's head. In the middle scene, the groom is bringing to Siddhartha his horse Kanthaka. In the lower scene, the prince flees the palace under the cover of night (here depicted as a veiled figure in the upper right corner, a Roman iconographic invention for representation of night). The sound of Kanthaka's hooves is being muffled by a figure carrying the horse and rider on its back, representing divine intervention that enables Siddhartha's smooth flight.

ATTACK OF MARA
THE LAST OF SIDDHARTHA'S PRE-ENLIGHTENMENT DEEDS

This frieze *(Figure 8)* shows Prince Siddhartha, already as the Buddha, seated under a pipal tree in deep meditation (through which he would reach *nirvana*), and the army sent by Mara, the god of all desires, to distract him. By a single gesture of his right hand, known as the *bhumisparsa*[i] *mudra*, he called the Earth to witness the final defeat of Mara, represented in the two succumbing figures under the Buddha's grass-strewn seat.

THE FIRST SERMON

The First Sermon *(Figure 9)*, one of the Four Great Miracles,[ii] is also known as the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Law. This was the Buddha's first renowned post-Enlightenment activity performed at the Deer Park at Sarnath near Varanasi, India. The relief depicts the Master seated under a tree canopy on a grass-strewn throne in which two deer are carved. It also shows the *triratna*[iii] (the Triple Jewel) with a *chakra* (wheel) on top of it, which symbolises the *dharmachakra* (the Wheel of Law)[iv] which he set in motion. He is seated in *padmasana*,[v] the yogic posture with legs crossed, revealing the soles to the viewer (here covered by his garments). He is flanked by his former six fellow ascetics (three on each side) who were the first ones to hear him elucidate the Four Noble Truths along with other elementary premises of the Buddhist doctrine, such as the truthfulness of the 'middle path' and necessity of avoiding excessive asceticism and indulgence in choosing the path to salvation. All six of them eventually converted to Buddhism, marking the beginning of formation of the Buddhist Order. Buddha's right hand is here showing the *vitarka mudra*, which signifies reasoning, while his left hand is resting in his lap.

GREAT MIRACLE OF SRAVASTI

The Great Miracle of Sravasti *(depicted in frieze 10, a relief from the National Museum, Karachi)* is one of the Buddha's most renowned post-Enlightenment wonders. Strongly opposed to performing miracles to secure new followers, the Buddha made an exception in order to convert six religious opponents. He caused water (shown as discrete ripples) to gush from his feet and fire to issue from his shoulders.

The next is a symmetrical scene from a frieze *(Figure 11)* in the Peshawar Museum showing the Buddha seated underneath a tree canopy, performing the wonder of self-multiplication (usually performed in four postures, i.e. standing, walking, sitting and reclining). This example contains only a bust of Buddha, and could be read both as a reference to the Miracle of Sravasti, and as an individual icon of the Saviour. He is flanked by two *bodhisattvas* topped by a meditating Buddha each in the foreground (on his right is Maitreya holding his attribute, the water pot), and Indra and

Figure 10. MIRACLE OF SRAVASTI (SUMEDHA AND NAKED ASCETICS)
2nd–3rd century CE
Sikri, Gandhara, NWFP
Schist H 34.3, W 50.8 cm
The National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, Acc. CML 2124

Figure 11. MIRACLE OF SRAVASTI
2nd–3rd century CE
Sahri Bahlol, Mardan, NWFP
Schist H 15, W 28 cm
Peshawar Museum, Acc. PM 02770

i. In *Sanskrit*, *bhu* is Earth.
ii. The other three miracles are the Final Birth, Attainment of Enlightenment and Total Extinction.
iii. *Triratna*, the famous three jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, his *Sangha* and *Dharma*.
iv. From Sanskrit, *dharma* meaning law, and *chakra*, meaning wheel.
v. From Sanskrit, *padma* meaning lotus, and *asana* meaning throne.

10.

11.

Brahma in the background. Buddha's hands are positioned in *dharmachakra mudra*—although this gesture is most commonly associated with the Deer Park Sermon and Setting the Wheel of the Law in Motion.

THE BODY AS SYMBOL

The section above is a biography of the Buddha on a series of stone reliefs which adorned Buddhist places of worship. The lotus flower is depicted frequently, symbolically referring to the images of the Buddha (and the *bodhisattvas*).

The final two images *(Figures 12&13)* are large rock engravings in an open, natural environment in Swat, NWFP, Pakistan, as opposed to the friezes which are mainly placed in site-specific architecture. *Figure 12* is that of the *bodhisattva* while *Figure 13* is of the Buddha; both are seated on a *padmasana* (lotus throne) within a trefoil halo-like frame. The visual representation with its comparative flatness of carving and its non-narrative nature suggest that it was meant to be read like an icon, sign or a *mandala* *(see page 6)*.

The more elaborate *Figure 12* has all ornamental attributes of the bodhisattvahood such as the crown, necklace, earrings, and the garment; even the border of the frame is decorated with stylized lotus flowers. He is in deep meditation with his hands resting in his lap. A particularly eye-catching detail in the composition is a single vine scroll on the Buddha's right that is loosely attached to the halo-frame. Taking into account the strict symmetry of the carving and its absence on the left side implies that the incision may have been left incomplete.

The friezes and the rock carvings reaffirm the central role of anthropomorphic iconography in the *Mahayana* Buddhist philosophy, allowing glimpses into the second and third centuries CE when Buddhism flourished in the region of Gandhara.

12.

13.

Figure 12. BODHISATTVA
Rock engraving in Swat, NWFP.

Figure 13. BUDDHA
Rock engraving in Swat, NWFP.

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1.

THE DESIGN OF SEALS FROM INDUS VALLEY
Geometric, Naturalistic & Narrative Motifs

JONATHAN MARK KENOYER

BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGY

The greater Indus Valley of what is now Pakistan and western India was the birthplace of the Indus Civilization also known as Harappa Culture[1] (2600–1900 BCE), an urban society that was contemporaneous with the great urban civilizations of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and China.

EARLY HARAPPA PHASE–CHALCOLITHIC (C.3300 BCE)

The earliest button seals are found during the later Chalcolithic period starting around 3300 BCE at Mehrgarh[2] and also at the site of Harappa (Ravi Phase, c.3300 BCE).[3] These earliest examples of button seals may have served as ornaments sewn onto clothing or worn as amulets. These seals were generally made of terracotta and occasionally of bone or soft soapstone.

KOT DIJI PHASE (2800–2600 BCE)

The Kot Diji Phase represents a period during which regional cultural styles of pottery and early urban centres were established throughout the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra region. Kot Dijian settlements such as Harappa and Rehman Dheri (Gomal Plain) emerged as regional urban centres, each with distinctive types of button seals, some of which were decorated with combinations of animal motifs and script. At the site of Harappa, a seal impression in clay indicates that some of these seals were used for more than just decoration; clay sealings were made to close storerooms or seal containers used for trade.

Continued on next page

Figure 1. Multiple-headed animal seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, National Museum of Pakistan (NMP) 50.294.

The seal with three animal heads depicts a short horned bull with head lowered and two antelope-like animals with horns arching together behind the head and in front of it; since there are no actual antelopes in South Asia with long forward-arching horns, it is possible that this animal represents a unicorn with two horns, or another mythical animal. The motif could represent an alliance between two families or an official who had multiple positions.

Note: The seals are not as per original scale.

INTRODUCTION

The evidence of graphic art during the prehistoric periods of ancient South Asia are preserved on a range of materials and created with various techniques. Cave paintings dating from 30,000 to 10,000 years ago found in Balochistan and throughout peninsular India were made with mineral pigments such as charcoal and ochre. Large boulders with geometric and naturalistic motifs created by pecking or incising (called petroglyphs) have been found along the upper Indus River and in parts of Balochistan and Afghanistan.

The earliest petroglyphs date from around 10,000 years ago and continued to be made through the prehistoric and protohistoric periods.[4,5,6] Many of the motifs appearing on cave paintings and petroglyphs represent aspects of the natural environment in which people lived: plants, animals, mountains, and the people themselves. Abstract geometric and floral symbols were also created and they probably reflected religious beliefs or ideologies about the structure of the universe or of society as a whole. Stepped cross symbols may have indicated sacred mountains, circle and dot motifs could have been astral or solar symbols, while the endless knot and stylized trees could have indicated concepts such as eternity and the branching tree of life that encompasses all creation.

In later historical times, travellers, pilgrims and invading armies carved their messages and symbols on top of earlier prehistoric motifs, revealing a continuity in the use of some symbols over thousands of years. Many of these same symbols were repeated on painted pottery, and various types of ornaments made from shell, bone, ivory, stone and metal. These various categories of preserved materials provide a rich repertoire of graphic design from the prehistoric and protohistoric periods, but one type of object, the seal, stands out as particularly important.

The seal is a unique type of object because it was used both as an ornament that bore a design, as well as a tool to replicate that design or symbol on other surfaces. Archaeologists who study seals usually divide them into two basic types: stamp seals that are pressed

vertically to create a design, and cylinder seals that are rolled across the surface of a material to create an endless repetition of a design. Both stamp and cylinder seals were created and used in different parts of ancient South Asia, but in this essay the focus will be on stamp seals of the Indus valley region *(Figure 2)*.

Stamp seals can be subdivided into two major types based on their design and possible function: button seals and intaglio (reverse image) seals. Button seals are generally decorated with deeply carved geometric, floral, animal or rarely, human motifs. These objects have one or more perforations through the body of the seal or a knob (boss) on the back with a small perforation so that the seal can be worn on a cord or sewn onto clothing. These seals were usually made of soft materials such as bone, soapstone or terracotta. While it is not certain if the early button seals were ever used for impressing clay, later examples were clearly used to seal containers.

Intaglio or reverse image seals were designed specifically for pressing into clay, stamping on textiles or foods such as bread, or even on the human body. They represent a unique form of graphic design that could be used to create multiple sets of identical images. These could be used to indicate personal ownership or control of another object such as trade goods. If a seal symbol had a ritual meaning the sacred sign could be stamped on goods for protection or good luck.

These various types of seals were used either as ornaments or as tools for creating designs on other surfaces, or served as visual symbols to communicate messages or ideas to the viewer. All communities use graphic design as a form of communication that can be expressed non-verbally and recognized by both literate and non-literate viewers. In addition to their non-verbal message some designs may represent one or more verbal expressions. These symbols and their various verbal meanings are used to reinforce and legitimize the social order and the ideology of a community.

We will now examine the origin and development of design on seals of the Greater Indus region. A range of geometric, floral or naturalistic and narrative motifs will be presented in order to reveal the complexity of the Indus design repertoire. The precise meaning of specific symbols is difficult to determine as symbols have different meanings for different people and a single symbol may represent many different verbal expressions. However, it is possible to gain some insight into the general interpretations of ancient symbols by looking at how such symbols have been used in later cultures in South Asia and other world regions.[7,8]

BUTTON SEALS

Button seals were made from a variety of materials during the Early Harappan, Harappan and Late Harappan periods. The most common material used at the site of Mehrgarh was terracotta, but a few were made of bone as well as soft stone, and one seal was made of what appears to be marine shell.[9] Another unique example was made from bitumen, a natural form of tar. Unlike the later seals, which have a relatively narrow range of

THE HARAPPA PHASE (2600–1900 BCE)

The Harappa Phase is the major period of urban expansion that is commonly referred to as the Indus Civilization or Harappa Culture. Seals with the Indus script and naturalistic carvings of animals are one of the hallmarks of the Indus cities. However a wide variety of other seals were also used, including those with narrative scenes and a wide range of geometric motifs. In addition to the discovery of actual seals, seal impressions have been discovered on lumps of unfired or low-fired clay. Other types of impressions were made on various shapes of clay tablets that were subsequently fired to create permanent moulded tablets. These tablets contain unique narrative scenes that have never been discovered on actual seals and therefore may have been made with wooden seals that are no longer preserved. Due to the lack of careful recording during earlier excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, the detailed chronology and context of many of the seals excavated by earlier archaeologists is unknown. However, the recent excavations have provided a general chronology that can be applied to these earlier discoveries.

THE LATE HARAPPA PHASE (1900–1300 BCE)

The Late Harappa Phase represents a transitional period during which many distinctive features of the Indus civilization began to change or disappear. The Ghaggar-Hakra River began drying up and people moved to the Indus Valley, Ganga-Yamuna Valley or to parts of Gujrat. Regional styles of pottery once again emerged throughout the greater Indus region, reflecting a change in focus to local economic and political processes. Seals with animal motifs and script were no longer used in the Indus region after around 1900 BCE, but geometric and floral motif seals continued to be used throughout the Late Harappan period. The regional styles of Late Harappan button seals represent some continuity in geometric designs from the Harappan times as well as the introduction of new symbols. The use of seals with script was not revived until the early historic period with the invention of the Brahmi script around 400 BCE.

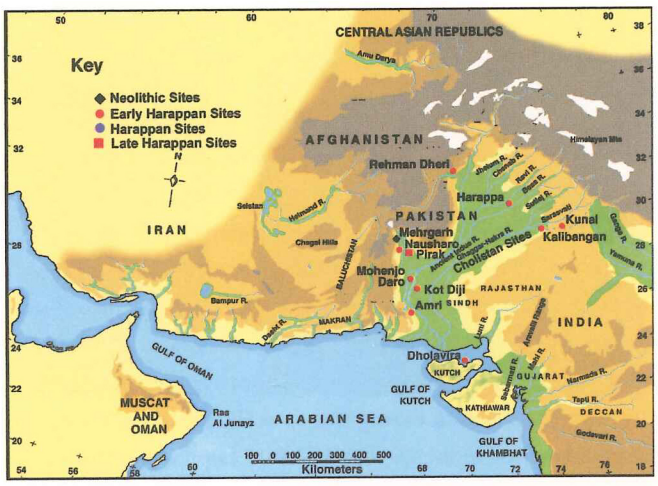
Figure 2. Major sites of the Greater Indus Region.

Figure 3. MEHRGARH BUTTON SEALS

a. Terracotta button seal, 2800–2600 BCE (Jarrige et al 1995: Plate 1.20, n).
b. Terracotta button seal, (Jarrige et al 1995: Plate 2.34, e).
c. Terracotta button seal, 3300–3000 BCE (Jarrige et al 1995: Plate 9.16, a).
d. Bone pendant, 3300–3000 BCE (Jarrige 1995: Plate 8.26, c).
e. Terracotta button seal.
f. Bone button seal, 2800–2600 BCE (Jarrige 1995: Plate 1.20, p).

Button seals with geometric, floral and narrative motifs began to be used in early prehistoric agricultural settlements such as Mehrgarh, c.3300 BCE (Figure 2)[10] and continued in use throughout the prehistoric and protohistoric periods. By around 2800 BCE, the first seals with script combined with various animal motifs were created in the proto-urban settlements of Harappa[11] and Rehman Dheri.[12] During the period of the Indus Civilization (2600–1900 BCE) a wide variety of seals combining various design motifs with Indus script were created and used at large urban centres such as Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and Dholavira, as well as at smaller towns and villages. With the decline of the Indus cities, the Indus script disappeared, but button seals without script continued to be used throughout the Late Harappan times (1900–1300 BCE) and on into the early historic period (c.600 BCE). The continuities and changes in styles of seals reflect larger social, economic, religious and political processes that were going on in the larger Indus region.

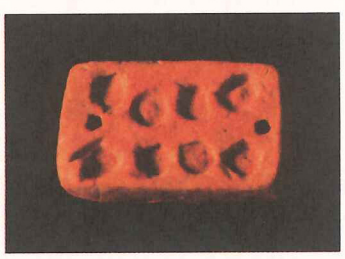
2.



3a–b.

3c–d.

3e.



3f.

motifs, the button seals from Mehrgarh reveal a wide range of motifs, *(Figure 3)* and most have been decorated with symmetrical designs radiating from the centre.

Circular or square seals with a cross or stepped cross motif *(Figure 3c)* are relatively common and this design continued to be used throughout later periods in the Indus region *(Figures 4a&b)*. One example has a swastika motif in the centre combining both the stepped cross motif and the well known swastika design. During the Harappa phase, stepped cross motifs were generally made on square seals made with either faience or fired steatite *(Figures 7a&b)* and occasionally on circular seals. This motif continued to be used during the Late Harappan period at sites such as Chanhudaro and Mohenjo-daro (Jhukar Period occupation).

The diversity of motifs and materials used in button seals suggests that they were made by many different people for personal use and that they must have had many different uses and meanings. Most of these seals were discovered in the fill in and around houses dating between 3300–2800 BCE (Mehrgarh, Periods V to VII).[13]

Swastika and stepped cross button seals *(Figure 7c)* were widely used during the Harappan phase. No swastika seals have been found from the Late Harappan phase, but the motif reappears during the early historic period on seals as well as in decorative motifs on architecture and sculptures.

During the Harappan phase (2600–1900 BCE) button seals continued to be used along with many other types of seals, but the range of motifs appears to have declined. This reduction in motifs during the full urban phase of the Indus cities could indicate a widespread uniformity in ideology and beliefs as well as some degree of centralization in the production of seals.

At the end of the Harappan phase, with the disappearance of writing and consequently the production of inscribed seals, button seals with many different types of geometric and floral motifs began to be produced once again. The Late Harappan button seals were made of faience or more commonly of terracotta, a material that was much more widespread in the Early Harappan than during the Harappan period.

The fact that button seals continued to be used alongside seals with animal motifs and writing suggests that they served an important parallel role in legitimizing social order and ideology.

SEALS

In contrast to button seals, with symmetrical geometric or floral motifs, seals with writing and animal motifs represent a totally new form of design that was first created during the Kot Diji phase (2800–2600 BCE) and continued to be refined throughout the Harappa phase (2600–1900 BCE).[14] The animal symbol is thought to represent a clan or official position in the social or political hierarchy of the Indus society. The most common animal symbol is the mythical unicorn, while other animals such as the humped bull and elephant are relatively rare. These animals were sometimes depicted with an offering stand or feeding trough that may have been used in special rituals. A short inscription in the enigmatic

Figure 4. BUTTON SEALS, PIRAK AND MEHRGARH (STEPPED CROSS MOTIF)

a. Bronze compartmented seal, Pirak, Period IIIA.
b. Terracotta button seal, Pirak, Period II.

They represent a variation of the stepped cross motif on compartmented seals made of copper and terracotta button seals from the site of Pirak (around 1800–1300 BCE).[15] *The simplicity of the design may contribute to its long life, but the fact that other simple designs disappeared, suggests that this motif may have had specific ritual or religious meaning that was passed down from generation to generation.*

Figure 5. HARAPPA BUTTON SEALS, KOT DIJI PERIOD

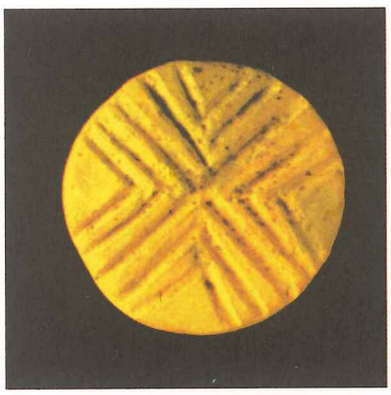
During the Kot Diji Phase at Harappa, button seals were made using soft steatite that was fired to harden.

a. Steatite button seal, H96-2740, Kot Diji Phase, c.2800 BCE.
The geometric motif on this seal may represent a form of house with a double-pointed roof. Similar motifs are found on later Harappan seals (Figure 18a) as well as on moulded tablets.

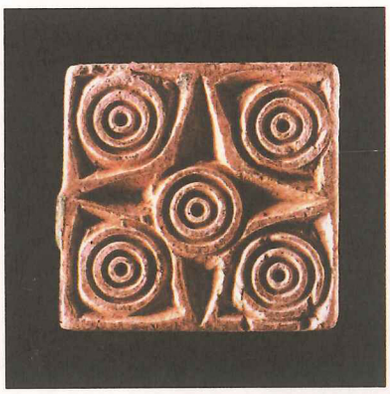
b. Steatite button seal, H2000-4495, Kot Diji Phase, c.2800–2600 BCE.
This seal has a distinctive motif that may represent stars or sunbursts and consists of double concentric circles with a central dot, arranged around a four-pointed star. While it is possible that craftsmen were making similar seals in more than one Kot Dijian site, the precise nature of manufacture suggests that these seals may have been made in highly specialized workshops at one or two major sites and traded throughout the northern regions of the Indus Valley.

Figures c&d. A third variety of button seal has carved floral motifs on the front and circle and dot motifs on the back. The steatite is well fired with a thin glaze, and the overall surface is very finely smoothed. The precise dating of this seal is not possible since it was found in disturbed layers at the top of a mound at Harappa.

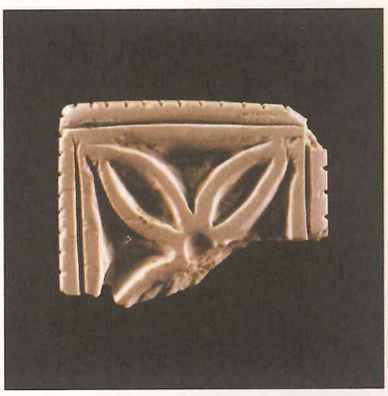
4a–b.



5a–b.



5c–d.



Indus script was generally carved above the image, but some signs were placed below the image or sometimes on the edges of the seal.

The Indus script has not yet been deciphered and yet the linear sequence of signs and the non-random nature of their use suggest that these symbols represent a form of writing. While some symbols such as the fish, pipal leaf, and the human form, appear to be pictographs, most scholars agree that the symbols were not used as pictographs, but rather as graphemes that represented a spoken word or the symbol of a larger belief or idea. Various types of diacritics or qualifiers appear to have been used to change the meaning of specific signs and it is thought that these signs represent words or syllables that when combined together with other signs would form a meaningful communication in a language that has yet to be determined.[16] This writing system is itself an extremely interesting form of graphic design and distinctive styles of writing were used on different types of objects. As will be discussed below, the style of writing used on seals changed over time, becoming more standardized and precisely carved towards the end of the Harappan phase (2200–1900 BCE). By 1900 BCE, after a period of more than 900 years, seals with writing and animal motifs disappeared along with the elite communities of the Indus cities who used them.

Impressions made by the square seals with both animal motifs and script carry two distinct messages. An illiterate person could see the animal motif and understand the meaning, while a literate person like merchants and traders, could read the script and understand the details of who owned the seal or the commodities being traded. Sometimes the clay sealings on goods had more than one seal impression and invariably the animal motifs of the earlier seals are obliterated by the later seal impression. This means that the writing portion of the seal was the most significant feature of the impression and it did not matter to the merchants and traders if the animal motif of some impressions was obscured.

EARLY ANIMAL SEALS

Most of the seals found from excavations at large sites such as Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, derive from the later phase of urban occupation, between 2200–1900 BCE. Recent excavations at Harappa have been able to recover seals from earlier periods that reveal some stylistic changes in both the animal motifs as well as the writing style.[17,18] Unfortunately, due to the difficulty of reaching the Early Harappan and initial Harappan occupation levels, only a few fragmentary examples of the earliest type of animal and script seal have been recovered.

The earliest seal dating to the Kot Diji phase, has an elephant motif but the upper portion is broken so the style of script is not known *(Figure 9a)*.[19] The use of the elephant motif is not very common on Indus seals and only thirty-eight examples are known from Mohenjo-daro *(Figure 13)* and ten examples (including the Early Harappan one) have been found at Harappa. In later times the elephant came to be a symbol of great power and elephants were used to carry gods and rulers in procession or into battle.

In later Indus iconography the bull, particularly the humped zebu *(Figure 12)*, is one of the most finely carved animal motifs and like the elephant it may have represented power and authority.

SWASTIKA

The swastika motif is found painted on pottery in Mesopotamia from even earlier periods, and this motif is widespread throughout the world. However, its specific meaning may have been quite different in each world region. Based on comparisons with later uses in South Asia in Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanical rituals, the symbol of the swastika represents order out of chaos. The chaos of the world is divided into four quarters and turned either to the right or the left. Where there is order, there is wealth and profit, and in South Asia, the swastika is associated with good luck and various deities that bring wealth, such as Ganesha and Saraswati.

The swastika was later used by Adolf Hitler to represent Indo-Aryan culture and became the symbol of the Nazi regime. Although Hitler used it as a good luck symbol too, the context of its use has given the swastika a totally different connotation in Europe and the Americas, where it is generally taken to represent a totalitarian regime. This example should be taken as a cautionary note to avoid projecting modern meaning onto ancient symbols without taking into account cultural, ideological and social contexts.

Figure 6. Bone button seal, Harappa, H98-3503, Ravi Phase, c.3300 BCE.

The earliest button seal was found at the site of Harappa, consisting of a fragmentary bone seal that may represent a swastika design.[20]

Figure 7. Harappa Phase Button Seals, c.2000–1900 BCE.

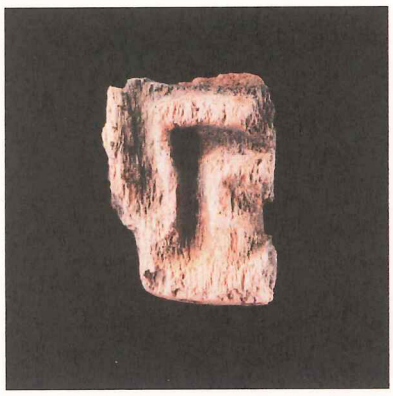
Most button seals were made with faience. The swastika motif was the most common form of decoration, followed by the stepped cross and circle and dot motifs.

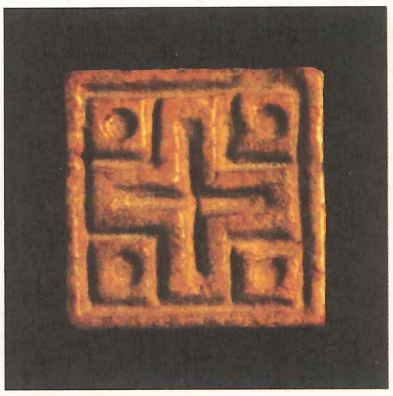
a. Faience button seal, double-stepped cross motif, H97-337.
b. Faience button seal, single-stepped cross motif, NMP 52.3015.
c. Faience button seal, swastika motif, H99-3814.

Figures 8a&b. Steatite seal with a swastika motif on one side and a bison motif with script on the other face, Mohenjo-daro c.2000–1900 BCE.

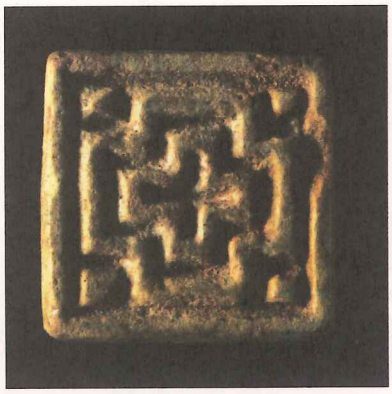
This seal was perforated laterally so that a cord could be passed through the seal. By using the cord as a handle both faces of the seal could have been used to make impressions.

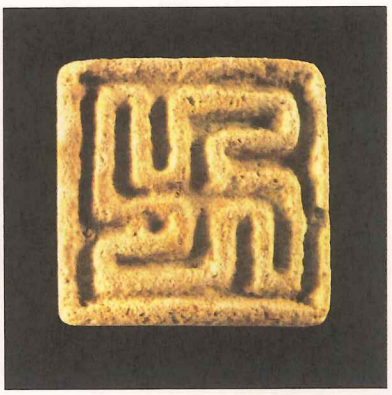
6–7a.





7b–c.





8a–b.

UNICORN SEALS

During the middle of the Harappan period (c. period 3B, 2450–2200 BCE) the first examples of seals with the mythical unicorn motif are found *(Figure 10a)*. The unicorn is a mythical animal created by the Indus people and a symbol that disappeared from the iconography of South Asia after the end of the Harappa period when the ruling elites of Indus cities disappeared along with their writing. Unicorn seals carried to Mesopotamia by Indus merchants may have spread the idea of the unicorn to the Near East from which it eventually reached the Mediterranean and finally spread into Europe. While some scholars continue to refer to this image as a bull seen from the side, several three-dimensional figurines of unicorns have been found at sites such as Harappa, Mohenjo-daro and Chanhudaro[21] and there is no reason to suggest that the seal images represent anything but a mythical animal. The unicorn is the most common motif found on Indus seals and is found at almost every major Indus site.

The unicorn motif is usually thought to represent a male animal since some unicorns are depicted with what appear to be testicles, as is the case with some of the humped bull seals *(Figure 12)*, but generally this detail is not carved very clearly. As with the bull and elephant, the unicorn must have represented a very powerful and widespread community. Unlike the use of the bull and elephant figure, there were no living animals to perpetuate the use of this type of image after the Indus elites lost power, and the symbol was not adopted by later political or religious communities.

Studies of the unicorn and other animal seals from Harappa and comparisons with Mohenjo-daro and other sites, suggest that each of the major cities had distinct seal-carving workshops.[22,23] In addition the way in which the script is carved appears to change over time. In earlier seals (Harappa Period 3B, 2450–2200 BCE), the script symbols are often crowded towards the left or over the head of the animal *(Figure 10a)*. During the middle phases at Harappa (Late Period 3B, c.2200 BCE), the script appears to become more regular and evenly spaced, but the orientation of each sign is still not standardized *(Figures 10b&c)*. The latest seals (2200–1900 BCE) have the most rigid form of script with very evenly spaced signs that run horizontally along the top of the seal, with no crowding over the head of the animal figure *(Figure 10d)*. These signs are also very deeply incised and oriented perpendicular to the line of text. This same type of rigid carving is seen on long rectangular seals that are found only during the last part of the Harappan phase (2000–1900 BCE).

OTHER ANIMAL MOTIFS

If the pattern of script incising seen through initial studies at Harappa can be confirmed, it may be possible to bring some chronological order to the hundreds of seals recovered from earlier excavations at both Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. For example, the elephant seals from Mohenjo-daro *(Figure 13)* reveal distinct styles of carving both the elephant figure as well as the script.

While the script on seals was usually placed in a single line above the animal motif *(Figure 13a)*, some examples have two or more lines of script and sometimes the signs are placed one above the other in orientations

Figure 9. Early Harappan and Harappan seals.

a. Unfinished Elephant seal, steatite, H2000-4474, Kot Diji Phase, 2800–2600 BCE.

The carving on the early Harappan elephant motif is quite crude compared to the elegant lines of the later seals but all the basic features, of trunk and tusks are clearly indicated. It is possible that this broken seal was a practice piece, and since it was never fired it may have been intentionally broken and discarded.

b. Broken Bull seal, steatite, H90-1600, Harappa Phase, Period 3A, 2600–2450 BCE.

This other early example of an animal motif carving found from Harappa is also fragmentary. It reveals sharp lines for the body of the animal facing to the right (left when impressed into clay), which may be some type of bull.

Figure 10. UNICORN SEALS *Steatite, Harappa.*

a. H90-1618, Period 3B? 2450–2200 BCE.
b. H87-262, Period 3C, 2200–1900 BCE.
c. H96-2736, Period 3C, 2450–2200 BCE.
d. H99-4064, late Period 3C, 2450–2200 BCE.

The Indus unicorn was depicted as a slender-necked bovine, with long tufted tail and hooves with fetlocks. A single horn emerged from the top rear of the skull and arched gracefully over the front of the head, ending in an upward point. The head is usually depicted with the snout raised as if it was inhaling or making a display of dominance over other animals. Most unicorn figures have a distinctive cover draped over the forequarters that may indicate a blanket or harness or possibly the sacred pipal leaf. The neck is often shown with multiple collars and the horn is sometimes incised to reveal a feathered or ribbed design. Unicorn figures are usually carved facing to the right (left when impressed) with a ritual offering stand that some scholars interpret as an incense burner or a container for holding a sacred liquid;[24] this stand is found almost exclusively with unicorn motifs. The proportions of the unicorn are not standard and some are carved with short stubby legs, while others have well-proportioned legs, arched neck and narrow body. As is common with cattle, a long remnant umbilical cord or dibble is seen hanging from the underbelly.

Figure 11. Unicorn pendant, unfired steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.125.

A rare example of a unicorn pendant from Mohenjo-daro shows the animal with a womb or kidney-shaped symbol in its belly. The figure is also framed by a more elaborate form of this womb-shaped motif. A pipal leaf motif is incised on the rump and shoulder, which may indicate that the coverlet on the unicorn figures may in fact represent a stylized pipal leaf, which was a sacred symbol of the Indus people. The ritual offering stand is placed in front of the unicorn.

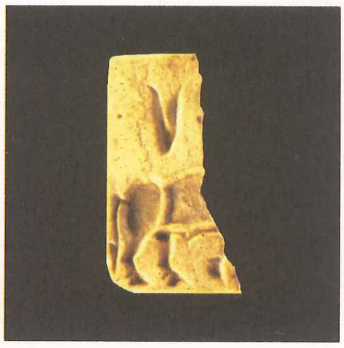
Figure 12. Bull seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.236.

The finely carved humped zebu may have represented great power and authority. The carving of the 'V' shaped script is slightly curved while in later examples the shape is more rounded 'U' and symmetrical.

Figure 13. Elephant seals, steatite, Mohenjo-daro.

a. Elephant seal with script, MD 1151 NMP 50.271.
b. Elephant seal with script, MD 1152 L P–902.

The proposed earliest seal (Figure 13a) has relatively narrow and less angular carving with irregular orientation (taking into account the wear from use), while the next seal (Figure 13b) has script carving that is very rigid with all the signs being carved at the same relative size and placed on a horizontal line with perpendicular orientation.



9a–b.

10a–b.

10c–d.

11–12.

13a–b.

14–15.

16–17.

18a.

18b.

that do not correspond to normal writing patterns *(Figure 1)*. The comb-like design on this seal with a three-headed animal is normally oriented vertically, but in this seal it is placed horizontally. The apparently haphazard position of the writing may have specific meanings for the ancient Indus elites, or conversely they could be due to later text additions. While some scholars have suggested that seal carvers may have been illiterate and did not understand the proper sequence or orientation of signs, it is highly unlikely that people who were carving such important objects would be ignorant of the meaning or proper orientation of signs.

SEALS WITH COMPOSITE ANIMAL MOTIFS

While most Indus seals depicted only one animal, some seals combined two or more animals to create composite figures, sometimes with multiple heads *(Figure 1)* and in other cases with composite bodies made from many different animals *(Figure 16)*. Composite animals may represent complex philosophical or religious ideas. The attempt to represent these concepts visually is quite remarkable and since we cannot hope to be able to unravel the specific meaning of these images without deciphering the Indus script it is best to simply describe the images.

NARRATIVE AND YOGI SEAL

During the later part of the Harappan period, a distinct category of narrative seals and seals with ritual images begin to be created *(Figures 16&17)*. The edges of these seals are often heavily worn, indicating that they too were also used to impress into clay, possibly by rulers or ritual specialists, but no clay seal impressions have been discovered yet. The need for narrative seals and depictions of ritual images suggests that there was some pressing need to promote specific ideologies in the context of the large urban centres. It is possible that these seals reflect a legitimation crisis where the ruling elites and ritual leaders needed to promote a unifying ideology in an urban context that may have been populated by people from many different regions of the north-western subcontinent. Many of these narratives are repeated in slightly modified versions on different sizes of seals, and the fact that the same scenes are found on seals at most of the larger urban centres indicates that the ruling elites of these cities were loosely united through common religious traditions.

LONG RECTANGULAR SEALS

Towards the end of the Harappan period, around 2000–1900 BCE, a new type of rectangular inscribed seal was developed that had only script and no animal motif *(Figures 18a&b)*. Impressions using these seals were made directly below each other so as not to obliterate the writing of the earlier impression. The absence of animal motifs could indicate that these rectangular seals were simply bureaucratic devices with no ritual meaning, or they could represent a new group of people who did not adhere to the symbols of Indus animals seen on square seals. However,

Figure 14. Water buffalo seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, MM 50.279.

Figure 15. Unfinished steatite unicorn seal, Harappa, HM 61, 54.5309.

When seal carvers made mistakes the seal was destroyed or the writing obliterated as is seen on this unfinished seal from Harappa. This seal clearly shows that two signs were scraped out, but it is not known if they were written incorrectly or if they were removed for other reasons. The seal was never fired and therefore never came into use.

Figure 16. Narrative seal with worship scene, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.295.

One of the most spectacular examples of a narrative seal shows a deity emerging from the sacred pipal tree, that when impressed would have been to the right. The horned deity either male or female, is looking down on a kneeling male worshipper whose hair is tied in a bun on the back of the head, as is seen on stone sculptures from Mohenjo-daro. This worshipper appears to be presenting an offering of a human head (also with hair tied in a bun), placed on a small stool. A giant ram with human face stands behind the kneeling figure, and a procession of seven figures is shown at the bottom of the composition. The figures, either male or female, wear a single plumed headdress, bangles on both arms and long skirts. Several script signs are interspersed with the figures along the top of the seal, and a single sign is placed at the base of the tree. This scene may represent a special ritual sacrifice to a deity, and the edges of the seal are heavily worn, suggesting that the seal was pressed into clay to create sealings with this scene.

Figure 17. Yogi seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.296

Another important type of ritual seal depicts a nude deity, possibly male, with three faces, seated in yogic position on a throne, wearing bangles on both arms and an elaborate headdress. Five signs of the Indus script appear on either side of the headdress, which is made of two outward projecting buffalo style curved horns, with two upward projecting points. A single branch with three pipal leaves rises from the middle of the headdress. The figure wears seven bangles on the left arm and six on the right, with the hands resting on the knees. The heels are pressed together under the groin, and the feet project beyond the edge of the throne. The feet of the throne are carved with the hoof of a bovine as on the bull and unicorn seals. Although the seal has not been extensively used to impress clay, other seals with similar motifs have been found with heavily rounded edges from repeated use, and numerous moulded examples of this type of yogic figure have been found on tablets from all major Indus sites.

Figure 18a. Long rectangular seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.349
Figure 18b. Long rectangular seal, steatite, Mohenjo-daro, NMP 50.315

The long rectangular seal was developed around 2000–1900 BCE having only script. The absence of animal motifs could indicate that these were simply bureaucratic devices with no ritual meaning, or they could represent a group of people who did not adhere to symbols of Indus animals.

the discovery of both types of seals within the same house at Harappa indicates that they were sometimes used by the same household. Furthermore, the technique of incising the script and its overall layout is identical on both types of seals and suggests that both were being made by the same workshops and possibly by the same craftsmen.

CONCLUSION

While there is clearly much more to discuss regarding the graphic design elements of seals, the preceding examples indicate that Indus seal craftsmen had a highly complex repertoire of motifs and multiple options on how to arrange them. Two distinct types of seals, the button seal and the intaglio or reverse impression seal were created for distinct purposes. One may have been used more widely and over a longer period of time to indicate ideology, while the seals with animal motifs and script were limited to more economic and political use. The use of different type of seals by people living in the same house suggests that elite merchants were involved in multiple transactions that required the use of different type of seals. Finally, it is clear that much work still remains to be done to better understand the range of different motifs and their overall chronology. The other area that needs considerable investigation is the multiple meanings of symbols that were used in the periods after the end of the Indus cities. While it is not necessary to project these later meanings back onto the Indus people, the symbols do reflect a legacy that needs to be investigated more fully.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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TIMELINE

BASED ONLY ON ICONS AND EVENTS IN THIS BOOK

3300–1300 BCE

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION
First civilization in Northern India with Harappa and Mohenjo-daro as urban centres.
Button and intaglio seals have been discovered with geometric, naturalistic and narrative motifs: the script on the seals has not yet been deciphered.

2000 BCE

ARYAN CIVILIZATION
Aryans arrive from Central Asia. Their religion forms the basis of Hinduism (sacred books The Vedas and Upanishads).
Society is divided into a caste system.

200 BCE

BACTRIAN GREEKS
Occupy Afghanistan, the Punjab and the North-West, the region referred to as Gandhara with Taxila as its centre.
Oldest dated anthropomorphic form of Gautama Buddha, from the late first century found in Gandhara, attesting to Mahayana Buddhism.

60 CE

INDO-SCYTHIANS
The Sakas, a Chinese nomadic tribe, invade north-west of India, expelling the Greeks and establish a Central Asian rule in the region.

c.100 CE

INDO-PARTHIANS
Gondophares creates a new kingdom, which includes Arachosia (Kandahar), the Kabul Valley and the Indus Valley.

c.600 CE

610 *The Qur'an is revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) over a period of 23 years.*
622 *Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) makes the Night Journey on Buraq—a popular icon usually depicted as a winged white horse with the face of a woman wearing a crown. The same year the Prophet migrates from Makkah to Madinah, the beginning of 'Hijra' the Arabian lunar calendar.*

c.600 CE

624 *Change of 'qibla' (direction) from Jerusalem to Makkah for Muslims to pray towards the Ka'aba, the small, cubed building built by Prophet Abraham as a landmark for the House of God. The Ka'aba is a significant feature in Islamic religious iconography.*
680 *Battle of Karbala. Zuljinnah, the steed of the martyred Imam Hussain (AS) features frequently in religious posters and Muharram processions.*

712 CE

Muslim invasions in South Asia begin.
Muhammad bin Qasim conquers Dirbal, Sindh.

c.1100 CE

Darya Pir, the oldest attested 'horsemen as saviour' in Sindh. Worshipped by high Hindu castes, especially the Lohanas. Iconographically depicted as a young warrior riding a horse, carrying a sword and flag.

1174–1294 CE

Char Yaar (FOUR FRIENDS)
Revered Sufi saints of the Punjab and Sindh: Baba Farid Shakar Gunj of Pakpattan, Jalaluddin Bukhari of Uch Sharif, Bahauddin Zakaria of Multan and Lal Shahbaz Qalandar of Sehwan Sharif.

1193 CE

Muhammad ibn Sam defeats the Hindu Rajputs and conquers Delhi, leading to the creation of the Delhi Sultanate.

1526–1857 CE

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE
The Delhi Sultanate is absorbed into the Mughal Empire, established by Zahir uddin Babur and ending with the rule of Bahadur Shah Zafar.

1595 CE

Khamsa of Nizami, a manuscript illustrated in the royal 'Kutubkhana' (House of Books) of Emperor Akbar—probably in the Lahore Fort.
Several falnamas (books of divination) are produced during the Mughal era.

1599 CE

According to legend, Anarkali, the beloved of Mughal Prince Salim (later Emperor Jahangir) is buried alive in a wall as the tragic romance is forbidden by his father, Emperor Akbar. The Anarkali Bazaar in Lahore is named after her.

1852 CE

The Scinde Dawk stamp of ½ anna is issued—the first stamp in Asia.

1857 CE

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE
c.1830–1858 *Lakshmi Bai, the Rani of Jhansi, rises to prominence, resisting colonial rule in her state and eventually sacrifices her life for the cause.*
Begum Hazrat Mahal, wife of the ruler of the kingdom of Awadh also plays a significant role in the revolt, by actively participating on the battlefield.

1858–1947 CE

The rule of the East India Company is transferred to the British Crown, referred to as the British Raj.
1876 *Queen Victoria is proclaimed Empress of India.*

600 BCE

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE
North-west India is absorbed into the Persian Empire, which stretches from Greece to the Indus.
A famous university is set up in Taxila, an important city in the empire.

327 BCE

Alexander the Great reaches the Indus River.
The Greeks rule the Indus Valley region until the early first century.
Greek influence is later discerned in the Buddhist friezes and sculptures.

320–232 BCE

MAURYAN EMPIRE
Chandragupta Maurya establishes an empire extending across northern India, present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan.

269–232 *Mauryan Emperor Asoka converts to Buddhism; his legendary reign is denoted by peace, prosperity and tolerance.*

c.100 CE

KUSHANS
The Kushan tribe of the Yue-Chi confederation assumes power in the region. They propagated Buddhism but are tolerant of other religions.

320–535 CE

GUPTAS
A dynasty with origins in the subcontinent is established by native-born Chandragupta I in northern India. The empire is considered 'The Golden Age of India' when art, culture and science flourished.

c.500 CE

THE WHITE HUNS OR HEPHTHALITES
The White Huns (who reigned over Central Asia) conquer the Guptas and establish their rule in the northern and southern areas of India.

c.1000 CE

Zoroastrians arrive in India after facing persecution in Persia.

1020 CE

Jhuley Lal or Udero Lal—the patron saint of travellers revered by both Hindus and Muslims. He is believed to have disappeared into the waters of the Indus River, iconographically represented by an elderly man with a white beard travelling on water with a fish as his vehicle.

c.1021 CE

After several attempts, Mahmud of Ghazni annexes the Punjab.

1206–1526 CE

THE DELHI SULTANATE
The five successive dynasties of the Slave, Khilji, Tughlaq, Sayyid and Lodhi which ruled India for over three centuries.
1236–1240 *Razia Sultana becomes the first and only woman to sit on the throne at Delhi.*

1496–1539 CE

SIKHISM
Guru Nanak founds Sikhism, based on his teachings and those of nine successive Gurus (Holy Scripture 'Adi Guru Granth Sahib').

c.1500 CE

CHAUKUNDI TOMBS
The time around which the oldest representations of horsemen in relief found carved.
Pithoro Pir and Rama Pir, 'horsemen as saviours' worshipped mostly by outcaste Hindu communities in Sindh.

1617 CE

The British East India Company is given trade rights by Emperor Jahangir.

1628–1658 CE

1634 *The Wazir Khan mosque is built by Emperor Shah Jahan in Lahore.*

1647 *Shah Jahan Mosque is built by the Mughal emperor in Thatta, Sindh. It has verses from the Qur'an carved in yellow stone in the Nastaliq.*

1848–1906 BCE

Raja Ravi Varma, Indian painter who achieved recognition for his depiction of scenes from the Mahabharata & Ramayana (the two Sanskrit epics in the Devanagari script of Ancient India, forming an important part of Hindu mythology).

1875 CE

The Mayo School of Arts and Crafts established in Lahore, with Lockwood Kipling as principal.
The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh founded by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

1885 CE

The Indian National Congress is established.

1906 CE

The All India Muslim League is established to represent the interests of the Indian Muslims in a Hindu majority India.

1907 CE

Rooh Afza, a beverage, is introduced by Hamdard Dawakhana in India. The original label, still in use, is painted by Mirza Noor Ahmed while the calligraphy is rendered by Syed Manzooruddin.

1914–1918 CE

THE FIRST WORLD WAR
Indian troops participated especially in the Middle East. In 1917, Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister promises India self-government as recompense.

c.1918 CE

The appearance of the earliest posters advertising wrestling tournaments dating from c.1980.

1940 CE

The Lahore Resolution is passed by the Muslim League, advocating the idea of a separate nation for India's Muslims.
The Jang newspaper named after the World 'War', is introduced in Delhi. The title piece is designed in 1947 by Munshi Abdul Majeed who also designed the current title piece in 1972.

1942–1943 CE

Congress launches the 'Quit India Movement', a civil disobedience movement called by Gandhi for attaining independence from the British.
Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) known as 'Mahatma' (Great Soul), leader of the Indian nationalist movement against the Raj and the founder of independent India.

1947 CE

INDEPENDENCE
The Muslim state of East and West Pakistan is created by the partition of India at the end of British rule. Its flag is designed by Ameer uddin Kidwai.

1950s CE

The launch of Pakola, a soft drink. Its branding was consolidated by K.U. Malany and Company, the Karachi representative of J. Walter Thompson.
Rooh Kheench portraits become popular in Pakistan during the 1950s and 1960s and are taken by street photographers in front of a range of hand painted backdrops.

1951 CE

Tibet Talcum Powder is launched by Kohinoor Chemicals Company, Karachi and printed by Elite Publishers. The iconic packaging was originally designed by Abdul Samad and improved by the artist Mirza Manzoor Ahmed.
Jinnah's successor Liaquat Ali Khan is assassinated in Rawalpindi.

1953 CE

The Naajo Mehndi package is designed by Zafar Ali, the original packaging of which is still in use.

1958 CE

The Mayo School of Art renamed as the National College of Arts (NCA) and is reorganized as a school of art, design and architecture.

1960s CE

The embellishment on trucks evolves into a popular art form referred to as 'truck art'.
Cinema hoardings and posters are increasingly used to promote films in Lollywood. The 1980s were considered the golden period for this genre. Currently the hand painted hoardings are being swiftly replaced by digital printouts.

1962 CE

Poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz is awarded the Lenin Peace Prize.
Artist and teacher Shakir Ali is made the first Pakistani principal of the National College of Arts in Lahore.

1967 CE

Haji Muhammad Sharif, a descendent from the Patiala family of the Maharaja's court painters, teaches art at the Mayo School of Arts. In 1967 Haji Sharif is awarded the President's Pride of Performance.

1969–1971 CE

General Muhammad Yahya Khan is President of Pakistan.
1970 *Victory in the general elections in East Pakistan for a breakaway Awami League, leading to rising tensions with West Pakistan.*

1971 CE

East Pakistan separates and is named Bangladesh. West Pakistan becomes Pakistan.
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is President of Pakistan from 1971 to 1973 and Prime Minister 1973 to 1977.

1980s CE

Ornamentation of W-11 Mini Bus starts in the late 1970s or early 1980s.
The US pledges military assistance to Pakistan, following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.
The appearance of typographic, mass-produced Ijtimaa' posters advertising religious congregations in the urban space.

1988 CE

General Ziaul Haq, the US ambassador and top Pakistan army officials die in airplane crash.
Benazir Bhutto's PPP wins the general elections in November 1988. The first woman prime minister is dismissed in 1990.

1990s CE

The development of the contemporary or neo-miniature movement at the NCA.
1991 *The Islamic shariah law is formally incorporated into legal code.*
1993–1996 *Benazir Bhutto is once again elected Prime Minister of Pakistan.*

1919–1924 CE

The Khilafat movement, a political campaign, is launched mainly by the Muslims of South Asia to influence the British government to protect the Ottomon Empire in the aftermath of the First World War. It becomes a part of the wider Indian independence movement.

c.1920 CE

Swedish match company, Svenska Tändsticks Aktiebolaget, establishes factories in the Indian subcontinent.

1939–1945 CE

THE SECOND WORLD WAR
India commits troops to the Allies, particularly in north Africa and Myanmar.

1947 CE

Indian postage stamps depicting a portrait of King George VI with 'Pakistan' overprinted are introduced. The name Pakistan is coined by Chaudhri Rahmat Ali in 1933. The word means 'land of the pure' in Urdu.

1947 CE

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder and first governor general of Pakistan, revered as Quaid-i-Azam, or 'Great Leader'. An enduring national icon, his portrait appears ubiquitously on coins, currency notes, postage stamps, advertisements etc.

1948 CE

The start of the circulation of currency notes issued by the Reserve Bank of India, overprinted in English and Urdu with 'Government of Pakistan'.
Death of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.
First war with India over the disputed territory of Kashmir.
Abdur Rehman Chughtai (1899–1975 CE) designs the Re 1 stamp for the first anniversary of Independence.

1954 CE

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) launches its first service between Karachi and Dacca.
In the 1950s, Leo Burnett phrases the slogan 'Great people to fly with'.
In the late 1960s the airline founds its own in-house agency, International Advertising Limited (IAL).
The uniform of the flight attendants is created by fashion designer Pierre Cardin in 1966.

1956 CE

The Constitution proclaims Pakistan an Islamic Republic.

1958–1969 CE

President Field Marshal Ayub Khan becomes the first Pakistani general to seize power through a coup.
The capital of Pakistan is moved from Karachi to Rawalpindi in 1960 to the newly built Islamabad.

1963 CE

The packaging of Jamila, the oldest brand of henna in Pakistan is designed by Salimullah Siddiqui.

1964 CE

Pakistan Television Corporation, the national television is launched.

1965 CE

The second Indo-Pak war is fought over Kashmir.

1976 CE

PIA's new identity is designed by Negus and Negus. Subsequently, Ogilvy and Mather, as well as Saatchi and Saatchi contributed to the PIA identity.

1977 CE

General Ziaul Haq, President of Pakistan, comes to power through a military coup d'etat.

1979 CE

Dr Abdus Salam is awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is hanged.

1990s CE

1997 *After the Pakistan Muslim League wins the elections, Nawaz Sharif returns as Prime Minister.*
1998 *Pakistan conducts nuclear tests after India explodes several devices.*
1999 *Nawaz Sharif is overthrown in a military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf.*

2000 CE

2002 *General elections are held.*
2005 *An earthquake in Pakistani-administered Kashmir kills thousands of people.*

2007–2008 CE

2007 *Benazir Bhutto is assassinated at an election campaign rally in Rawalpindi.*
2008 *General elections are held.*

RESEARCH CREDITS

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